

The
GREEN EDGE OF ASIA



A VIEW OF SCHOOL

The
GREEN EDGE OF ASIA

by
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PREFATORY NOTE

I AM indebted to the editor of *The Listener* for permission to reprint Chapters I to II of this book, which have already appeared in that journal. A number of alterations and revisions have been made in nearly all of the chapters as here reprinted, more especially in Chapters I to 4. Chapters 4 and 9 have been rewritten in part to meet certain criticisms which were made by residents in China after publication in *The Listener*. The final essay is now published for the first time.

R. P.

February 1937

TO
CYRIL AND JOAN KING

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I

Japanese Overture

I SHALL never forget the day when I first landed in Japan. It was in February, after two weeks on the monotonous Pacific. I was up at seven; the sun shone already; the air was clear as glass. "Go forward till you reach a notice saying 'No admittance,'" smiled the officer. "Go right on. You'll see her facing you." I obeyed. I looked before me and saw nothing. Bitterly disappointed, I was about to turn away when I realized that the blue expanse that I was staring at was not the empty sky but the shimmer of a veil of snow. Hanging in the sky, ice-still, severed from the earth below, and held up as by a picture-cord, a great snowy pyramid, in whose shadow we might anchor as it seemed in half an hour, filled half the heavens. Two hundred miles away, and twelve thousand feet above my head, Mount Fuji faced me.

I let an hour pass. The sea glistened; white-prowed fishing boats dipped and danced among the waves. Without flicker, without shadow, without movement; secret and still; Mount Fuji faded.

I never saw it again. And although, to the inhabitants

of the country, it is a symbol of Japan, yet I noticed little in the Bay of Tokyo, and later, occupied with the complicated process of landing, nothing in Yokohama, to remind me of it. On one side of the Bay of Tokyo, at the foot of wooded hills, giant, aluminium-painted oil tanks, shaped like gasometers, decorated the seashore. On the other side, clusters of wireless masts, chains of electric pylons appeared over the landscape, pricking the sky. Aeroplanes, singly and in platoons, hummed overhead; sea-planes ripped up the water and roared a yard above our masts; islands, no more than a heap of rocks but fortified, came into sight, drew sinisterly near, unphotographed, and slipped behind us. Pinnacles and motor-boats dashed out from hidden coves along the shores, circled about, uncommunicative, and dashed away.

The scene was like an armed fortress, the atmosphere suddenly of war. Even a bare volcanic islet, the size of a suburban garden, that had recently, one night, risen out of the sea, was now inhabited and a "fortified zone." What manner of heroes formed its garrison, and how did they sleep of nights for wondering whether their fort might not vanish as it had come?

In Yokohama we docked to the minute, in perfect style. Brown sea-hawks and white gulls hovered and swooped about the ship's masts. Gentlemen in sober grey cloaks, with arm-hole capes, wooden sandals, and homburg hats, watched us phlegmatically from

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the quay, standing with their arms folded inside their ample sleeves, and producing in this way a dreadful effect as if their arms had been amputated at the elbows. Japanese ladies, dressed in gay kimonos and obis, white socks and wooden sandals, chatted prettily in couples, protecting their elaborately dressed hair from the wind with umbrellas, paper and "foreign." Their socks had the big toe separate, like a finger in a glove, so that it could hold against the thong that passes between the toes and splits into two thongs, which are fastened one to either side. The only variation, except among those Japanese who dressed in "foreign style," was the shoe worn by the dock-labourers. This might have been a "plimsol" sand-shoe, except again for the separated big toe. Made in a rather clumsy fabric, black, stoutly edged, and heavily worn, it looked ludicrously like a cloven hoof, and all the more so below the black trunk-hose that these sturdy fellows wore, their bodies wrapped in short dark loose cotton tunics with a belt.

This traditional dress was much more attractive than the black cloth continental uniforms, with close collars, gilt buttons, and peaked caps, that the young Customs clerks were wearing. Their dark clothes, their dark-rimmed spectacles, the sheafs of paper that they carried while they picked their way among the passengers and their baggage, gave them an air

of almost self-conscious discomfort, and I pitied them their task.

"Books!" announced the clerk, looking at my half-dozen, as he might have said "Kismet. It is Fate!" In Japan dangerous thoughts are guarded against unremittingly by a patriarchal government; and literature of all kinds, as I had been warned, excites close scrutiny at the customs.

Economic Conflict and Control; Trade and Trade Barriers; Handbook of the Pacific Area; Manchuria, Cradle of Conflict, afforded my young official (as they afforded me) ample food for the mind.

"Pleasure? Novels?" nevertheless he asked, fluttering the leaves of *Problems of the Pacific*. I nodded. "Wait—pleass. I get—our—book expert." He returned with the "book expert," also apparently of about twenty-five years of age. Working quickly through the above collection of frivolities, he plunged his hand into my box and drew forth *The Good Earth*.

"Ah! Economics!" he challenged. "Serious," and disappeared. The first clerk stayed by me, fingering my small library as if uncertain whether to reopen matters or let them be. Conversation flagged, as did soon my companion's interest in Far Eastern economics. He sidled off to handle more routine matters. As the book expert reappeared from his office, he came up again, now demurely possessed of a copy of

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the *Mid-Pacific Travel Journal* and the *Christian Science Magazine*. The book expert bent again over my box and came up this time with a handful of pamphlets—a fearful and alluring problem. I remained silent, as I had done throughout this drama. Suddenly shuffling the pamphlets together with one hand, the book expert brought *The Good Earth* from behind his back slowly with the other; and placing the one upon the others with both hands, he presented them to me with a ceremonious bow.

“All right,” he said. “Pleass,” and slipped away.

“Many red tapes,” murmured a voice at my elbow. I smiled at the brown face and gold-filled teeth, but said nothing. For my mind was occupied with a scene which I had witnessed earlier that day, and which caused me now to wonder how best to proceed to Tokyo. The Customs House was several hundred yards from the quay-side, and while I had been waiting for my luggage to be brought there from the ship, I had sauntered another quarter of a mile towards the town. I had just turned about in front of a small refreshment shop, when a ricksha drew up bearing a Chinese passenger with whom I had talked on the voyage. The place was filled with dockers and ricksha-men eating and drinking and resting. I had recognized Mr. Li from a little distance, and I could not help noticing the contrast between his tall figure, as he leaned back in the ricksha in his long silk gown, and

the short figure of the puller as he stooped forward between the shafts, his crumpled black cotton tunic fluttering from his sides. I had noticed the pale Chinese yellow face, and the broad sunburnt face of the puller. I had even noticed the puller's number on his "mush-room" straw hat—it was a 7—and, reflecting on the Japanese love for orderliness, had wondered what the Chinese thought of the ease and quiet with which he had no doubt been able to step into the first ricksha in the waiting line, in contrast with the screaming, bargaining mob in rags that would have deafened and besieged him at Shanghai or any other port in China.

I must have shown some of my surprise at Mr. Li's stopping at such an unlikely place, for he explained that he was on his way to Yokohama station to catch the train to Tokyo, and that the puller had just asked to go into the shop to fetch something. In a very few moments the ricksha-man came out, picked up the shafts, and quickly made off. As I was saying good-bye I had caught side of his face: it was a different man. More peculiar still, his hat bore a 7. It was the merest chance that I had noticed either of the men or their numbers; indeed that I had been on the scene. It had struck me as I walked back to the Customs House that the passenger—to whom the puller has his back—would probably not observe the change. I wished that I had time to watch for the first man to leave the shop.

Were these Japanese detective methods? If not,

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what did the incident mean? Was the change of pullers merely the arrangement of two friends, devoid of any significance, sinister or otherwise? Whether Mr. Li was a secret agent or the innocent business man he seemed, I did not know. I myself was neither, and I had nothing in my box more sinister than a few solid volumes of economics, nor did it matter to me if every movement of mine was to be followed till I left Japan. Not that I believed this likely; far from it. Nevertheless, I now decided to take a taxi up to Tokyo and to refuse, however heartlessly, all pleas that the driver might present for pauses, for whatever reason.

The car sped away over a fine modern road through what looked much more like an enormous village than a city. Small wooden bungalows, with sliding paper windows and with roofs of grey barrel-vaulting tiles, lined the road and spread away endlessly on either side. Tramcars, push-carts, bicycles, motor-cars, and lorries filled the streets. Women in kimonos tied behind with huge bows sauntered by, some of them carrying pretty brown babies on their backs.

The enormous village thinned out and we crossed a golf-links, empty except for a man carrying water to a green in two jars slung on a bamboo pole across his shoulders. Then village again, with advertisements, electric sky-signs, traffic-lights that most of the traffic ignored, shops entitled "Traed Mark" and "Curio

King," and open shop-fronts filled with oranges, toys, sweets, and children. The bungalows became fewer, stone buildings more common. The inevitable aeroplane droned overhead. Now the village disappeared entirely and I found myself travelling through one busy thoroughfare after another in a modern city built of stone and concrete, and made up of shops, offices, cinemas, and blocks of flats such as might have let me suppose that I was arriving, not in Tokyo, but in Birmingham or Berlin.

At last we came out on a fine boulevard, beyond which I saw a moat, and beyond that a magnificent stone rampart, crowned by the most Japanese-looking crooked little pine-trees growing on a grass bank. The car turned into a small drive and drew up before a large two-storeyed building of yellow brick. I climbed out and entered the hotel. Half a dozen Japanese page-boys in emerald and gold uniforms rushed forward and seized my luggage; a Japanese clerk in morning-coat bowed to me imperturbably from behind a counter with exactly the same air as a Swiss hotel-clerk, a French hotel-clerk, an Italian, Austrian, English, Dutch, German, or Belgian hotel-clerk.

"I reserved a room," I said. The clerk glanced at a paper.

"Mr. Pyke?" he asked. "Oh, yes. Number 231, please. Certainly; we will pay the car. If there is any-

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thing you require, please use the telephone in your room. There is no mail," he added in perfect, easy English, "but this note was left for you this morning."

I walked across the bizarre hall, half foreign style, half like a feverish child's dream of Japanese style, and followed the page to my room. A Japanese maid, in Japanese orange-coloured obi and sandals, bowed to me with gentle gravity, took a room-key off a hook and, holding it horizontally in her two hands as it might have been a lily of France, extended it to me with a murmur and another bow.

My room, pleasant enough, was—an hotel room. Only a pair of rush sandals by the bed told me that I was in Japan. A file of green-and-gold page-boys appeared with my luggage, disposed it about the floor, bowed, received recognition, bowed again with charmingly suppressed elation, and withdrew. I was alone. I read my note. I was to be alone for thirty-six hours more, until Monday morning.

I looked at my luggage. Unpack! I pushed the hateful thought away. Go out and see the town. But what town? "Birmingham"? "Berlin"? My spirits drooped. Was that Japan? How could I now, alone, with so little daylight left, find my way to the Japanese parts of the town, like those that I had passed through, twenty minutes away by car, on my way here? At a loss, and of a sudden gloomy, I wandered back to the enormous, rambling entrance lounge and ordered tea

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The unjapanese atmosphere, the tiresome pseudo-familiarity of the streets close round the hotel, the sense of bathos and lost initiative, plunged me into a dull and stupid mood. I looked round hungrily for some sight, some face, some accent that might bring me a sense of reward. I saw nothing. Morning-coats, gold-braided porters, revolving doors, fur wraps and lipstick: I might have been sitting in the Piccadilly Grill.

Not even the posters by the entrance, "Amusement Guide," "Cars for hire," "Travel by this line," "Travel by that," betrayed the slightest breath of allurements or of quality that was Japanese. My eye lit on some coloured pamphlets: Nikko, Hakoné, Miyanoshta.

Nikko! I walked over to the desk and asked for the timetable.

"But you could barely catch that one. Besides, you would get there after dark."

After dark!

I recalled the name of a Japanese inn that had been given me. After dark! How my spirits rose as I saw myself walking up the village street under the stars!

I ran to my room, stuffed a pair of pyjamas, a toothbrush and a book into my overcoat pocket, ran back through the hall, and jumped into a waiting taxi. We bumped and bounced into and out of pot-holes and puddles and over criss-cross tramlines. The cheerful driver tooted and charged and edged his

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way through the traffic, recklessly jumping his traffic-signals while the sky-signs ran about us in fluid streaks of mercury and salmon's-blood and the February dusk drained off the light of day.

The side-wall of the station loomed. The driver brought his taxi against the curb, scrambled down, and ran me up the stairs. He huddled into a queue, bought me my third-class return ticket, threaded us a way through the swarming crowds to the gate of the platform, took his cap in his hand, panting and laughing, listened to my thanks, took my tip of 50 *sen*,¹ saw it, and, overcome, smiled brighter-eyed than ever, with a combination of dignity, sincerity, and merri-ness that I was to see often again in this exquisite country but never to grow used to.

I walked up the platform beside the train, then turning to the passing guard, "Nikko?" I asked.

"— — — —," he answered, rounding off, so, my first independent conversation in Japan in Japanese.

I thanked him and jumped in.

¹ Fifty *sen*, which is half one *yen*, is worth about 7d.

2

The Inn

HOW my spirits rose, as I walked up the village street that night under the stars! I had travelled eight thousand miles, in snow and rain and sun, in trains and steamers, for three weeks cooped close to strangers; but at last! It was cold, delightfully cold. The air swirled down the broad street, I put up my head, and set out. At last! I could hardly believe it: at last alone, eight thousand miles from a friend; a million miles from anyone who knew where to find me; alone, with no one, nothing, no raucous voice, no servant, no table-talk. I was in Japan.

There was no moon; there were no street lamps, and the street had been black but for the lights shining in the shops every few yards. It had still been light when, four hours earlier, I left Tokyo—a town not so very different from any modern city, as seen through the windows of a taxi between hotel and station. But here, my first view of Japan and of the Japanese was almost like a spy's: I had come upon them in their lives, watching them through a glass brightly lit. they not knowing they were watched, as

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they sat about, as families gathered round the low tables to eat their evening meals, or as they stooped over some home labour, and made pencils or tooth-brushes or toys. But I saw them in the last leisure hours of their day, when privacy or a different rhythm, a more personal task or the mere taking of ease changed them impalpably from their day-time selves and made them more individual, more attractive, more important. What I saw was leisurely; I saw it suddenly, saw them as might an angel descended on this earth from heaven. Out of doors there was not a sound.

I zig-zagged up the street, glancing quickly through this lighted shop-front and that, at open barrels of oranges, at toymakers crimsoning their soldiers, at sacks of glistening rice, at brown men and women, girls and boys, sitting on their pale rush floors, sewing, sewing, sewing, and their unheard lips moving, smiling, drooping, behind that magic glass, or at blurred puppet-shadows miming behind pale paper windows.

A figure clattered towards me on wooden sandals, turned, and accompanied me. He wore a brown cotton kimono with full, short, open sleeves; his throat, forearms, legs, and feet were bare. I walked beside him in my tweed suit and overcoat. His eyes twinkled and he laughed while we confirmed to each other that it was his master's inn that I was making

for. We turned uphill, walked across a forecourt, and came to the entrance of the inn. Like the curtains before a stage, sliding doors, with paper windows, moved apart. I saw a floor of strange dark polished wood; behind, the light unstained wooden balustrade of stairs leading to a gallery; on one side, by the entrance, a great brazier; and on the other, two women and a man. They were dressed in gowns draped about their bodies, the man in brown, the woman in grey. As they saw me, they folded their arms; the man bowed and the woman bowed, the girl knelt, and without disturbance of her black swan's-breast hair-dressing brought her forehead to the ground. I stood outside the threshold and bowed. I raised a foot to cross it. Six hands rose against me, pointed to a row of rush sandals on the step. I took off my shoes, stepped into the biggest pair of sandals, and feeling like Gulliver in Lulliput, followed the maid upstairs.

She led me along the broad bare gallery, floored with the same polished wood; she slid back pale screens edged in black lacquer, bid me step out of my sandals, and brought me through a first room to an inner.

Is it possible to transpose to paper and from paper to an English eye outside Japan the grace and dignity, the elegance, the beauty, the repose of that, of every Japanese room? Its pale, soft matting floor, its delicate

walls, the sliding panels to the alcove shelf, the smooth cushion on the floor, and the low brazier in its polished wood case, holding the charcoal glowing through its minute ash. Spacious, and twelve feet square.

I knelt back on my heels on the cushion and took from the hands of a kneeling servant a sweetmeat and a bowl of jasmine tea. She watched to see if they pleased me; then nodded with me in my approval and filled the small bowl again.

The doors slid apart. Outside, a young man bowed, slipped off his sandals and walked in. "Bath," he said, more in command than in invitation. He stood on one side of me, the girl on the other; I undressed. Stripped, I took from his hands a quilted kimono of silk, and followed him downstairs.

"Bath-boy," he announced, pointing to himself.

"Yes!" I answered.

From a huge wooden bath he filled a dipper, and held it out. I felt the temperature; it was just right. He nodded, then splashed the warm water over a wooden stool. He pointed me to it. I sat down, and he emptied the dipper over my back. Then, seizing my arm, he scrubbed me as I sat there—my arms, my legs, my body.

"Bath-boy!" he shouted, and laughed riotously. I laughed back through the soapsuds and steam. Then the dipper again, till I was allowed to step down into the wooden tank, two feet deep in clear water. I lay

in it, while the bath-boy, singing at the top of his voice, bent over something.

"All—r-right?" he asked. I shook my head. "All—r-right. You stay!" he shouted, and left me. In ten minutes he was back. Reluctantly I came out, to be handed a steaming towel less than two feet square. In some dismay I clapped it to my shoulders, and as it reached saturation he handed me another. In three minutes, incredulous, I was dry. He stood behind me and wrapped the quilted silk about me.

"*Bath!*" he proclaimed.

Not refreshed merely, but soothed, renewed, I went back to my room, feeling under my feet the cool, clean rush surface of the sandals. Over the brazier a maid cooked sukiaki—rice, thin strips of meat, celery and mushrooms, adding hot water and soya sauce from time to time. Each piece was picked up separately in chopsticks; each piece was set separately, held in chopsticks, on my plate on a lacquer tray.

Lacquer has many beauties, in its lines, its colour, its touch, its smooth, dull, polished surface, its rounded edges, and its cool completeness. But its greatest beauty is in none of these things. To discover, to be seized by that, it is necessary to see, to use, not one piece, but many pieces, not many pieces, but a set. Trays and dishes, bowls and plates, large, small and medium, in glowing dull red; arm-rests, brazier-case, door-frames, and cabinets—all of them lacquered in

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glowing dull black; surrounded by these, yielding to their restrained sensuousness, at last one can begin to enjoy order in art and art in living.

The maid gave her attention entirely to the cooking and to me; to my hands, my face, my movements, turning to her maid assistant to remark and laugh, then back to me. I laughed too. After the tea they left me, and in an hour returned to make my bed—quilt after quilt, white, upon the floor. They watched me take off the kimono and get between the quilts; then assured themselves that I was comfortable, knelt, and withdrew. I finished *On the Conversation of Lords*, stared once more about the room, and turned out the light. It was dark and quiet; I, and everything round me, were at rest. I was in Japan.

The cold woke me. Through the panel that I had slid back in the paper wall I saw a matted corridor, and through the glass wall of that the branches of a pine-tree white with snow. As I looked, more fell. Downstairs, in the communal wash-room, I found a toothbrush and powder laid out in paper wrappings. Breakfast and a brazier were waiting in my room. I abandoned the quilted silk of the kimono with regret. I went downstairs and, once more shod with my incongruous shoes, left, amid murmuring bows, for the temples.

It was eight o'clock; from a grey sky snow was falling steadily; it was cold.

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book, and the ticket, were discovered. In English I apologized; I smiled and thanked them. They laughed. Downstairs they lined up while I pushed into my foreign shoes; and as they had greeted me, so they bade me good-bye.

Floundering down the village street in the grey afternoon, the snow still falling, I passed between the open shops under their little brown roofs, the oranges and toys and rolls of cotton cloth now lustreless and unlit. I passed swathed and padded Japanese five-year-olds, a flush over their brown cheeks, eyes sparkling and black, as they slithered doggedly about on bamboo skis. I passed swirling motor-loads of Japanese boys, off, not to visit temples, but for ski-ing parties. I overtook a disconsolate porter from the foreign-style hotel, and we turned into the station together. He took off his snow-covered hotel porter's cap, drew in his breath with the hiss that common courtesy required, and bowed.

I returned the bow only, and stepped into the waiting train. When I reached Tokyo it was dark.

3

Mibu

IT is not always easy, when travelling, to know when you have had enough. The more you travel, the greater courage you acquire to stop at the right moment, to eschew an additional sight or expedition, and to do nothing for an afternoon except enjoy the air.

I was returning to Kyoto from Nara. The day was beginning to give warning of its approaching death; its gentler pulse and the hush of its imperceptible decline reached and penetrated me. I no longer felt the energy or eagerness to fill my last hours in Kyoto as I had planned. I watched the sky gleam and the thatched roofs grow gold as the defeated sun glanced upon them in his fall. His light caught the profile and the black swan-breast of oiled hair above the forehead of the Japanese girl sitting between me and the window. It darted into the pupils of her bright eyes, she jerked her head away, and caught me, *flagrante*, staring at her. Staring in Japan is a rule rather than an exception, but my European guilt had not been left in Europe, and I tried to cover my confusion with

a smile. She smiled too. How attractive are the Japanese! That casual smile filled me with delight, and, suddenly, with energy. The train jolted to a halt; I picked up my bag, turned to the Japanese girl and her husband, bowed, dumb but transformed, and dashed for a taxi.

"Mibu," I said, and repeated it distinctly, "Mi-bu."

There was no need to sign to the driver to go fast; the Japanese, with motor-cars, still seem happily to be enjoying the new-toy feeling. I tried to follow our route so as to be able to find my way back later to the station when I should have to catch my night train for Tokyo. I knew that we were travelling west, and I marked the long straight thoroughfare with the tramlines. But after ten minutes we took a turn, and in the next ten minutes we took ten more. At last we crawled, hooted, forced our way down a narrow lane and drew up before a temple gate. I paid the eightpenny fare, and said, "Wait here," doubtfully and pointed. The driver nodded.

It must be half over—that I knew. I ran through the crowded courts, paid my twopence at the turnstile, kicked off my shoes and ran up the temple steps two at a time. But I was not in the temple proper. I found myself in a wooden, pillared building, open back and front, about 120 feet square. I had entered from the back, and before me were a couple of hundred men and women and children, sitting on the floor with

their backs to me, their kimonos spreading out round them. There they sat, like spring bulbs, looking out over a balcony, across a street, at the open front of another building opposite. The temple building opposite jutted forward from an open-fronted gallery that led into its side; low railings ran along both the gallery and the jutting stage.

The sun had set; the sky blazed blue and purple, showing in silhouette the sweeping, serene lines of the temple roof. Under its eaves glowed and swayed a row of paper lanterns, casting soft ruddy light on golden-robed figures gesticulating with swords. They stood on the jutting stage; behind them stood a dark plain figure thwacking a gong; along the gallery, beside them, craned from under the blue-and-white back-cloth the heads and shoulders of a score of little boys.

A stage monster roared, the gong intoned, the glowing lanterns swung gently in the breeze, making the actors' shadows clash in incorporeal conflict. Round them, gilding the golden lights, rushed the dark empty sky, blue, deepening to blue, deep, deep, deep. I stood transfixed, as one might step into the centre of an electric storm and be held paralysed.

A touch on my leg from an exploring child, and I picked my way as far forward as I could and sat down on a vacant mat. Still the two figures moved silently about the jutting stage, swearing friendship in arms

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and brandishing in formal sweeps and twirls and lunges their long curved swords. They stepped stiffly, encased in magnificent robes of soft gold, sleeves three feet deep making their arms invisible. Narrow hats of gilded cloth, a foot high, coming to a horizontal knife-edge running from front to back, were held to their heads by black cord tied under the chin. Their feet were hidden by the balcony.

The absorption of the audience; its attitude of sharing and support of this living legend, their legend; the intimate disposal of the stage and the unconcealed movements of the gong-player and stage-hand evoked the image of a stage in Shakespeare's England. But the stillness of the audience, the stiff movements of the actors, more resembling demi-gods than men, were not a part of this Shakespearean phantasy. The rest, including the fine frenzies of the tousle-maned Monster, was straight from the frolics of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The Monster howled, and pranced towards the warriors. First one met it in combat and came off with a wound, then the other; then the first returned, and he and the Monster joined battle again, dancing, prancing, slashing, stamping, posturing, round and round, in and out, backwards and forwards, and across the dim and darkening stage. A fierce encounter, the Monster fell, then with an ambiguous roar leaped over the balcony down on to the tan and fled.

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Mibu wiped his sword, expressed with a noble gesture his gratitude to his companion, and was about to take his rest when, with an ultra-monstrous roar, the foe returned. Now there was a fine set-to; the swords flashing as they were swung and plunged about the neck and shoulders of the beast, with such a swift skill and vigour as are not seen in Europe in mock combats. Half dance, half battle, the ceremonial went its way.

At last Right conquered; the Monster fell; executed his last contortion "front centre"; and rolled over on his back. The warriors sank their swords into his vile body again and again; then, stooping, raised in sedate triumph the severed head. The swords were wiped, the gong throbbed twice, and Mibu and his doughty friend walked out. The tale of Mibu, Prince, was over.

The stage-hand walked forward, climbed on to the balcony-rail, and raising a white-painted bush of twigs, fixed it like the Prince of Wales's Feathers, over the centre of the stage. Then he lifted down the paper lantern nearest him, and balancing himself on the railing, shuffled along, taking down the rest.

The audience rustled, the children chattered, an old woman at the back began to hand out sandals and shoes at the foot of the stairs. I waited until the last lantern was blown out. The "auditorium," now a plain bare floor forty yards square, was nearly empty.

Below me in the open lane dividing the auditorium from the stage, I saw the heads and sandal-tips of passers-by clopping on their way. The sky was black; the stage dark and empty with no atmosphere of stagey pathos or illusion spoiled.

The only "property" was the net hanging from the stage balcony into the lane, from which, in accordance with tradition, the people scrambled for broken pottery thrown down. I had missed this obscure part of the story of Prince Mibu's life; all I knew was that the pottery is smashed, the pieces, which are believed to bring good luck, are dropped into the net, and from it are thrown among the people. Now, calling from the sea, the net hung empty and incongruous. Prince Mibu was now glorified for his brave deeds in this his temple and in its yearly enactment of his life. I turned away, into the auditorium, put on my shoes, and between the crowds and lanterns hurried through the forecourt to the temple gate.

I peered to right and left; the car was gone. It was dark; I stood, four miles from the railway station, in a lane exactly like a thousand lanes in Kyoto, like a hundred thousand lanes in Japan; save for "please" and "thank you," I could speak, read, and understand no syllable of Japanese; my departure, timed for a liner's sailing and the start of a three-weeks' journey left me a little over an hour. I stared down the lane once more for the phantom car, then started to walk.

My memory of the way held out for about three minutes. I negotiated two turnings, then, standing at a cross-roads, sought in vain for some method by which to choose the right road. I turned to my left, and fell over a tradesman's three-wheeled motor-van drawn up on the side. The driver looked at me sympathetically. I smiled at him.

"Kyoto Station?" I asked, pointing. "Kyoto Station," he answered with a nod.

"Taxi?" I asked. "Taxi," he repeated. "Taxi fifty *sen*." Taxi fifty *sen* was no news to me. "Taxi here?" I tried, and pointed to the ground between us. "Taxi fifty *sen*," he repeated, thus ending, so I felt, Berlitz Lesson One.

I tried again, and at last he understood; but his answer was a hopeless sigh. "*Taxi?*" I flung, pointing to his tri-car, and grinned. He shook his head. You do not offer money in Japan in the same way that you offer it in Europe and in some other parts of Asia; so I said, "Thank you," in Japanese, and, as a last act of faith, set off again.

I walked on. After fifty yards I heard a shout behind me, and there came up, panting, my tri-car boy. "Taxi?" he grinned. I snatched his arm and, as we ran back, nodded. When we reached our original meeting-place, he stopped. There was no taxi. He pointed to his tri-car, and repeated the magic word, "taxi." I nodded violently. "O.K.," he said and

climbed on to the saddle. He showed me a ledge beside him, the size and shape of a push-bicycle's saddle-bag, which projected from the front wall of the van. Somehow I got on to this ledge, and wedged my back against the van by pressing one foot against some part of the front wheel, leaving my other foot, for lack of something better, swinging in the air. Before my face I held my ten-pound bag, and, with me thus balanced, the left handlebar catching me full in the stomach, we moved off.

The bump of an occasionally missing cobble-stone, the frequent, urgent need for right- or left-wards compensation as we lurched round corners, the almost harshly restricted surface of my ledge, and the amplitude of the exhaust petrol all served to keep my thoughts occupied and to distract them from that gnawing anxiety of the passenger about to miss his train. Soon, out of the corner of my eye, I recognized a street, and at last, bouncing like a fishing smack before the breeze, we hove into the great station square. My friend would not hear of dropping me there, from where I could have made a course straight across the square in a couple of painless minutes. He insisted on completing the course with a bold luff and fetching up in style under the full brilliance of the flood-lit entrance. I staggered down from my position, drew out two yen, and thanking him with all the genuine warmth that I could convey, handed

MIBU

them to him. He waved them away with that beautiful gesture of the *caballero* that you may yet meet with in a few parts of the world where the art of living is still practised and cherished as one of the axioms and ultimate values of life. For a moment I was transported to Granada, to Connemara, and to the temple and time of Mibu. I saw my rescuer's bright face, smiling, amused, content. I insisted. I nodded my head and babbled and put my hand round his elbow, and laughed and pressed the coins on him. Then he laughed too, and whipping off his driver's glove, accepted, and shook me with warm words by the hand. I picked up my bag, waved to him, and turned into the station.

In a moment I was surrounded by the hubbub. In another I felt a tug at my sleeve. There was my friend.

"Ticket?" he asked anxiously. I nodded, and showed him my return half.

"All-r-right," he grinned. We saluted.

4

Whose Town ?

“SHANGHAI is not China.” It is on everybody’s lips in China, on nearly everybody’s in Shanghai. It is true.

But Shanghai is not Europe, it is not America. What is it? It is nobody’s, and it is nowhere. That is one part of Shanghai’s tragedy: it is nobody’s “home-town,” in the real sense. It used to be everybody’s Tom-Tiddler’s ground, now it is an asylum of refugees: White Russians with Chinese passports, Chinese poor and profiteers, a base for Japanese imperialists, English money-men, Germans, Spaniards, Czechs, and Frenchmen. It has no homogeneous population of the third and fourth generation, few if any white men who would stay there unless they had to. The foreigners have been a corruption to the Chinese, the Chinese to the foreigners; yet all are tied and tied close by one single bond—money. The commonest if not the only reason why anyone lives in Shanghai is to make money—to make a minimum or a maximum as quickly as possible—to make money and get out. That is the other part of

WHOSE TOWN?

Shanghai's tragedy. Shanghailanders, as Nietzsche said of the human race, are like hedgehogs: they cannot bear solitude, yet as soon as they come together they stab each other and withdraw. I defy anyone to love Shanghai.

Meet her face to face. Land on that proud waterfront, the Bund, which flanks the Whangpoo River, filled with its junks and liners and the foreigners' men-of-war; the Bund, with its brazen face, and its lumpish modern buildings, some more "modern" and more lumpish than others; the Bund—imposing but not impressive, for it does not deceive; like the face of a commonplace woman whom time and her own character have begun to mark, and who thinks to hide, and only emphasizes with her powder and enamel, what everyone can see.

Come down the shrieking Nanking Road, with its trams and motor-cars and rickshas, its bicycles and buses and shops and triumphant new "Department stores" filled with trailing Chinese girls fingering the silks. Turn down the Thibet Road, with its teams of sweating carters, and coolies staggering behind their wheelbarrows, past the Great China Hotel, the New Asia Hotel, into the "bad" district, with its prostitutes ambling hand-in-hand beside their women-owners; with its fun-fairs and alleys and arcades, into the Chinese City.

Which will you have, the humdrum or the

picturesque? The Willow Pattern Temple Tea House, in the lake, with its zigzag bridge to keep away bad spirits (for bad spirits can move only in a straight line); the Temple of Confucius, murky with the smoke of incense; the wood-carvers, the curios, the ivory-workers, the "jade-" and "antique"-dealers, and the open booths? Or the humdrum of everyday: the narrow lanes and stinking alley-ways; the population relieving themselves here and there and everywhere of every kind of call that nature makes; the swarming street markets, where you may buy almost putrid fish, or a lettuce or a cabbage from the fields infected by their loads of human excreta; the crawling beggar showing his raw stump of an amputated ankle; or the whitebeard, bent with the paralysed companion of his days, lifeless but alive, corded on his back, while he steals forward, a quarter of a mile an hour, from nowhere to nowhere?

But this is not the whole of Shanghai. Come back past the racecourse, free gift to the town in perpetuity, keeping a fine green open space for sports and racing, in the heart of the town. Come further now: through the "night-club" district, whose brave attractions can best and most fairly be treated in silence—for they can scarcely be said to exist—out to the "West End," enhanced by its beautiful Jessfield Park.

Wait five minutes on the Bubbling Well Road to let the Japanese procession pass. It is only a column

of sailors, khaki-clad and steel-helmeted, with rifles and equipment, a few tanks, a few four-pounders, and a few machine-gun motor-bicycles and side-cars. Think what you like; let the Chinese look well; these Japanese are here, and here to stay. The gun-turrets crowning the tanks revolve slowly as they move down the street; through the turret-tops stick steel helmets and bayonets, revolving too. Stern stuff, and impressive, until a tank breaks down and has to be left behind, the steel helmet and the bayonet still poking through the top, the object if not the cynosure of all eyes. A lorry comes to tow the derelict, bereft now, like a stage dragon in the daylight, of its terrors, back to its lair. The road is clear.

Swing round again, north-east, across Shanghai's other great waterway, the Soochow Creek, out of the comparative safety of the International Settlement, through its steel, barbed-wired gates marked: "Warning: These Gates are Bullet-Proof." Now through Chapei, rebuilt, fantastic analogy of Flanders, on and beside shelled ruins that are often too expensive to pull down. See the daily life, the work and play, of the huddled poor: their work as carpenters, joiners, metal-workers; or buying and selling. They buy and sell a hundred different things, but all by weight—scrap-iron, watercress and spinach by the leaf, spectacles, noodles, motor tyres, and old clothes. *Old* clothes; not second-hand, but tenth-hand, classi-

fied into baskets of shoes—shoes—shoes, rags—rags—rags, or whatever it may be, weighed and bought by the load for fifty copper cash in the hand. Their play: the children buying one peanut at a time, or a coloured sweet twisted into the image of a goblin “while you wait,” the story-teller, the wireless, the cockney street-games, hop-scotch, and the rest.

If Shanghai has the worst housing conditions in the world, it is because of its comparatively greater security, because of the irresistible magnet of the foreign industry and commerce and prosperity that pull round them ring beyond ring, grade beyond grade, lower and lower, of human workers, always working, eternally hoping. See the bright hope. See the challenging plan of “Greater Shanghai.” And see the Chinese “factories.”

Leave Chapei and the Japanese district, with its Japanese schools and barracks; leave the University of Futan with its sieges and stabbed policemen and searched and shot undergraduates; see at least one co-ordinated effort on the grand scale. Come over the flat plain to where they have planned a real “civic centre,” and a new civic life. Even if the wilderness of the plain is not yet filled and vanquished by human effort, even if some air of dereliction still broods over the empty buildings scattered beside the planned, dusty roads, yet come through the Chinese-style town hall, or “civic centre,” with its black marble columns

and polished halls, its library and dining-rooms and administrative offices, its mayor's parlour and his private suite and his inner inner sanctum with five telephones. Climb up the concrete stadium, capacity twenty, fifty, a hundred thousand, whatever it may be; admire the 80-yard open-air swimming-bath, admission forty cents, the running track, the museum, the middle-class cottages of every foreign style from Gilbert Scott to Corbusier, and the spartan barracks for police. Incongruous, hesitant, bewildering effort though this all may be, an effort, an impetus, a plan are there.

That is also true of the struggle with the "factories," if such they can be called. Many are crazy houses, two stories high, the top story divided again into two stories hardly high enough to stand in, hot, dark, filled with unguarded machinery, and beds. Children, like their mothers and fathers, work at the one, and sleep, live, in the others, taking it in turns, day and night, to occupy them. The temperature may be only eighty degrees, or only a hundred and four; the mothers, from seventeen to forty, may be pregnant, the children, seventeen to nine, may be dying. Dying from berri-berri, from lungs falling into powder, from poison in their gums or eyes; or they may be fitter to survive, and not, comparatively, at a disadvantage for a finger or two gone in the machinery, an eye filmed, or knuckles festering with fungus.

THE GREEN EDGE OF ASIA

Good, sturdy two-roomed cottages do their best by sleeping forty women by day and forty more by night, to meet the housing problem; tents contrived with mats, some even floored with mats, provide for the less fortunate all the permanency and security of a home. Children that are not owned by factory-owners may spend in these, with parents whom they know, the sleeping part of their no less brief lives. Municipal council inspectors, preserving a courage, a perseverance and an optimism that must be seen to be believed, wage ceaseless war, not against a company of gloating fiends, but against the forces of fierce, remorseless competition, the imperative necessity for quick profits—quick, however small—and the stupendous, the unimaginable, weight of numbers. Yet conditions are better than they used to be and better than they are in a great part of China. Other factories also exist that possess modern buildings and are decently conducted. Public opinion in Shanghai is not utterly indifferent to the problems created there, but difficulties and interests of many kinds have to be fought. Take what satisfaction or what encouragement you can from these facts, for you will need both; the struggle will be a long one.

Come away. For all that, in Asia, these horrors cease, comparatively, to be horrors, leave them for the clearer air and solace of the sunset, the yellow, gilded light just breathing on the water of Soochow

Creek. If you cannot, in Shanghai, reach Nature, try to forget Man. Let your gaze rest on the wavering reflections, on the dark shadows of the sampans packed side by side in rows with their noses to the banks, on the broad hoods over the cockpits or amidships, on the glowing ruddy teak polished with use. See the blue cotton coats still hanging out to dry, and the flickering lamp-light; hear the shouts and talk and laughter that come from the sampans as the evening meals are cooked and eaten. In mid-stream more sampans and junks, laden to the water's edge with cement and vegetables or empty but for a haze of coal-dust, swerve down the current or plug upstream under the stolid punting and bold helmsmanship of men and women. Blue-clad crews squat on the decks round a dish or two, filling their long-suffering stomachs with half a pound of rice and some dish-water. Behold, they live.

But these are not the whole population of this waterway. Look down. Held together by the mud on which it rests is something that was once a boat, twelve feet long and three or four feet at its broadest, a hood covering its length. A child crawls out and scrambles up the quay wall to fill a bucket from a tap. He grins; and while he picks his way between the garbage, the bent body of first one, then a second, then a third member of this human family can be seen taking advantage of his absence and manœuvring

to other positions, equally incredible, in which to eat, sleep, not move, but have their being. Extending for six yards on either side of this home is the bare mud in its unmitigated stench. Then its surface is interrupted, to the right and to the left, by another home like the first, and six yards beyond that, to the right and to the left, by another, and then another, and another, till the Creek bends.

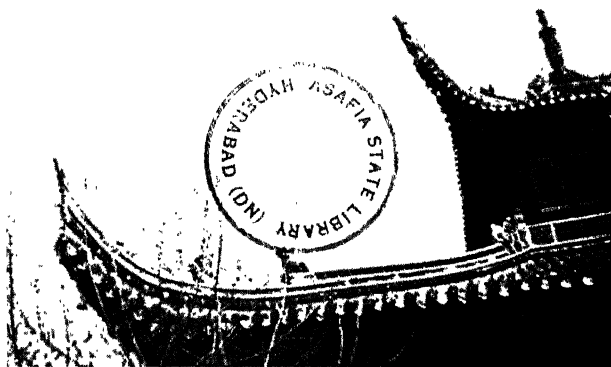
Forget. Come back over the bridge, into the Settlement, into civilization. Leave the Creek, and its "S.M.C. Ordure Loading Stations," where stand the empty tuns; leave the draggled story-teller with his audience on the wharf; leave the cookshops, with their sizzling messes and fragrant smells and the stray cat sitting in the frying-pan; leave the open-fronted rest-houses preparing for the night, with their tiers of bug-ridden bunks, the nearest not ten feet from the blaring street and going to the first-comer for one-third of a penny or more the night; leave the squalor and hopelessness and hunger. Get away down the Thibet Road that looks like a listing ship, one side low in the water, with single-storied Chinese shops, the other a rampart of six, seven, and eight tiers.

Forget. Fix your eyes on these glittering façades: they are the brand new emporia and the moving picture theatres, erected, if one may borrow a phrase from the South Manchuria Railway Company, in "the modern American Renaissance style."



A CHINESE FEAST-WEDDING

Or Funerary? "Little boys . . . balance on their heads glittering crowns encrusted with imitation jewels"



THE TEMPLE OF PO-SZE-TA, SOOCHOW

"Dragons and dogs . . . pranced between the branches of an almond-tree against a cloudless sky"

WHOSE TOWN?

Livid threads of violet neon-light streak them about; they can compare successfully for noisiness, stylelessness, and pretentious flattering vulgarity with those of any of the great and ancient capitals of the world. Forget. Do not shrink from the spirit of the age. Come into the Moving Picture Theatre. The "big picture" is now showing, it is *Modern Times*.

5

Soochow

SOOCHOW is the city of magnolias, an *magnolia* means the spring. Yet I associate Soochow with two events of a most unvernial nature—a funeral and an arrest.

It was Easter; the station was crowded with Chinese and foreigners who had come out from Shanghai for the holiday. Most of the holiday-makers were bound for Lake Tai beyond the town and for the shrine that crowns the neighbouring mountain. Only a few stayed in Soochow itself. It was possible to wander through the streets and lanes and to visit the temples and be the only white man present. This was a pleasure; not a misogynist's pleasure, but because a white man looked so incongruous. Indeed, the sight of one among a Chinese crowd always reminded me with a shock that my own presence was no less so; and it may have been this fact that led to the incidents of which I have spoken.

For the greater part of the day Soochow was as good as its name; the magnolia-trees gleamed proud and wax-like in the temple garden, the forsythias

SOOCHOW

leaned their pale yellow points against the garden walls, and lilac everywhere roused the senses tenderly.

In the courtyard of Po-sze-ta children played, an old man squatted on the ground smoking his long-stemmed pipe with its bowl smaller than an acorn-cup, and even the pestering lout whom it had taken an hour to wear down must have felt the spring. The white-painted iron dragons and dogs in procession down the gables of the temple roof pranced between the branches of an almond-tree against a cloudless sky; the temple roof-bells tinkled in the breeze.

Across the streets of the city the shop-streamers waved in their hundreds, scarlet, blue, saffron, and white; pedlars chanted their wares, playing their trade drum, cornet, fiddle, or scale of bells with a new vigour, while even the decrepit crawled out of doors, on two sticks, but alone. As the sun rose higher the main streets began to grow sultry with its reflected heat, and one turned with relief into the narrow lanes that ran beside the canals, where the cabinet-makers and their apprentices worked all day in their open-fronted shops or under the shade of old blue awnings stretched between roof and roof. Even in the remotest of these lanes it was simple to keep one's bearings, whether by the wall of the city or by the rectangular plan of its streets.

In Soochow—as in how many other cities in

China?—there is a “Temple of Confucius,” which, even if all streets do not lead there, it is somehow impossible to miss. Here is the very pulse of the town. Prayers and pray-ers are there, incense, silver paper-money for the dead, and priests. But there is much else. There are crowds surging and sauntering, men, women, children, old and young, the gazer, the gossip, and the money-changer. Above all, the money-changer. Filling the temple, from the Great Gateway to the very steps of the altar, there is buying and selling of every article imaginable: fruit, mirrors, meat—raw and cooked—razors, toys and joss-sticks, bootlaces, sweets, silk and cotton fabrics, tea by the glass, shoes, noodles, and smoked spectacles. Some wares are exposed in booths, others simply on the ground, but most are displayed on the pairs of little double-deck trays, that can be joined by a bamboo pole, and, with this resting on his shoulder, can thus be carried off at any time by their owner without ado.

But although wares and owners and public are so thickly spread that there is hardly room to move, yet transactions are relatively few, and the slow pace and clamour grow wearisome. To break the tedium one may, recalling that one is on Temple ground, betake oneself to prayer or contemplation. Some—surrounded by the hubbub—do. Others, including perhaps some of these worshippers, both young and old, prefer the story-teller. For a copper or two, the

equivalent of the twentieth of a penny downwards, one may listen to his tales, thrilling, humorous, bawdy, told with the maximum of gesture and expression and the minimum of make-up. A once coloured rag or an old cap, a pebble in the palm for a lady's mirror, a dash of chalk about the face and neck for her powder, and a couple of pieces of bamboo to click against each other for emphasis or to capture the attention, are all that he needs besides a few standard plots, a gift of the gab, a power of mimicry, a broad joke now and then. These at least are all he has, except sometimes an additional trifle from the authorities, given in exchange for government propaganda. Neither then nor in the tales of adventure do the stories appear to be tragic or sad, although to distinguish between joy and sadness is often difficult among the Chinese. When amused, they will laugh, when shaken they will smile. Even a wedding cannot always be distinguished from a funeral, as a Chinese author recently admitted. The best rule of thumb is to look for the colour white—white robes or white lanterns. These mean mourning. No doubt a simple and fairly reliable test would be to look for a coffin, but in a procession four or five hundred yards long it is not so easy to apply; and in the courts of the wedding or funeral feast it is impossible. The behaviour and composition of the company afford even less of a guide; in both cases there is a

thoroughly convivial atmosphere and the tables groan. In both cases representatives of every generation of relatives share the hospitality and contribute to the gaiety and noise.

Paper decorations of many colours are slung across the ceiling or tacked on bamboo frames against the walls. Little boys, dressed in elaborate costumes of crimson and silver and green, balance on their heads glittering crowns encrusted with imitation jewels. Then, tired of the effort and of their elders' incessant talk, tired of sitting still and of the unconscionable time taken to prepare the feast, they tilt their crowns on to the backs of their heads, or, putting them on the table where they were set to wait, proceed unobtrusively to pick them to pieces.

To the Chinese, or to the initiated foreigner, there may be many ways of telling these two ceremonies apart; to the foreign visitor there remains at least one other. Not by the sharpest powers of observation nor by the keenest deductive thinking can he decide alone. Indeed, let him beware. The louder the fireworks, the brighter the bunting, the more generous the feast, the less likely is the ceremony to be what he thinks. Mien and menu are equally misleading. But if the spectator cannot reach the head of the procession to seek for the coffin, he may find evidence near the other end. This evidence is the chair, that is, the sedan-chair, or palanquin, of the deceased

SOOCHOW

which is carried in procession by four bearers, empty but for a large framed photographic likeness of the defunct, such as may be seen hanging in many a humble cottage in England.

It was by this quasi-empty chair that I was first enabled to judge that the procession that I met with in Soochow was a funeral. Knowing the leisurely course that such processions take, to prevent themselves from becoming split up, I made my way behind the lines of spectators towards the rear. Here I found the second intimation of mortality. This was a group of men and boys clad in white linen gowns, and each carrying a frond of "palm." The tail of the procession being cut off from the body at a cross-roads to let the traffic through, these men were standing about aimlessly chatting among themselves and to the next group of hired mourners. For it must not be supposed that anything more than a part of a Chinese funeral cortège or wedding procession is composed of near and dear. The rest, often the greater part, are professional mourners or the town poor, lending their presence for a pittance, and arrayed in robes of diverse hues that have been preserved from imperial days, when each kind carried special significance of rank or office. So strong are custom and tradition, so important is "face," that a family will literally well-nigh ruin itself for the sake of making a good appearance and preserving its social status.

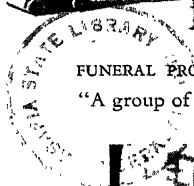
THE GREEN EDGE OF ASIA

From the end of the procession I made my way forward again past the empty palanquin bearing the cottage enlargement, past a group of hired mourners robed in sage-green brocades of imperial mandarins of the third class, past a cluster of young male relatives mounted on shaggy Mongol ponies and turned out in every style of dress from traditional indigo gown and black silk jacket to trousers, collar, and tie, and soft hat; until I came to a group of the strangest effigies, seven or eight feet tall, set on low wheeled platforms, each drawn by a pair of little boys. The effigies, wearing top-boots and paper crowns, were dressed in tinsel-bordered draperies of magenta and green, and they came into view in twos and threes as I neared the head of the procession at last. Fascinated by the strange creatures, I was about to use my camera upon them when to my dismay I discovered that I should need to change a film. I began to hurry through this operation. In the middle of it I found myself hampered by a face peering from a distance of some six inches, first at the dismembered camera and then at me. It belonged to a policeman. Ignoring my smiling invitation to give me room, he fired a question at me, to which I could only shrug. While he repeated it, and added others in rapid succession, I completed the change of film, and still smiling blandly stepped forward to the procession. He followed.



FUNERAL PROCESSION, SOOCHOW

"A group of the strangest effigies"



ENTRANCE TO
THE COURT OF
PO-SZE-TA
TEMPLE,
SOOCHOW

"Even the
decrepit crawled
out of doors, on
two sticks but
alone."

A small crowd had gathered, silent, interested, not hostile, so I felt, but not friendly. To a policeman an audience is no doubt in some degree a challenge, be he Chinese or Anglo-Saxon, Celtic or Sikh. Impossible as it was to elude this one by flight, I slackened my pace and affected oblivion of his presence. It was the best thing I could think of, though not very good, seeing that the sun was behind us and his shadow jogged before me at my feet.

Whatever it was that he had asked me before he now repeated it. I affected not to hear. Again he asked, this time so much louder, so peremptorily, that I turned round. Again I could only shrug. His little truncheon twirled, his eyes stared into my face and he began to extend his arm for the evident purpose of seizing mine. I decided that if the police station lay past the head of the procession, I would photograph those effigies or die in the attempt. But I had miscalculated. As the policeman's hand reached my shoulder there was a shout from the crowd behind him. He jumped round. I stayed still. The shout turned suddenly to a roar—a roar of laughter. A lady, too impatient at the traffic, had been spilled head over heels out of her ricksha. Where she fell, there she lay—not three paces from my policeman.

For several moments he stood, torn by exquisite agony, between us. A contortion by the lady, another volley from the crowd, and the policeman was at

THE GREEN EDGE OF ASIA

her side. Not, however, to help her, but to beat her ricksha-man.

I stepped back on to the pavement, slipped down a lane, and five minutes later came out upon the margin of the town.

The willows were budding and the grass was green past which I climbed to the overgrown and fissured ramparts. At my feet slid the blue Hangchow Canal gleaming, flat as a scimitar, between me and the rich plain of Kiangsu. Willows overhung the further bank, clumps of poplars sheltered thatched homesteads here and there, while files of blue-clad figures, the eternal bamboo loads across their shoulders, jogged over arched bridges, along paths between golden blots of mustard marking the green plain. The evening light lay on all the landscape, a raft of lumber, fifty paces long, serpentine'd its way down the Canal, imperceptibly propelled by the wind against its languid sail. From the parapet of those deserted walls I looked across the fluttering sampans at the green edge of Asia.

6

The Monastery of Secluded Light

HE prodded him mischievously in the navel three times, then, dropping his stick, turned round and gave me a broad grin. I grinned back. This singular action had been explained to me.

Many years ago a certain noble general, Yao Fen, was traduced by the Prime Minister, Ch'in Huei, and his wife, a vile couple, who were discovered and disgraced. Yao Fen's tomb, a massive brick hemisphere, faced with cement, and lying in a walled courtyard of a shrine made sweet with trees, is honoured to this day. On the statues of the evil Minister and his wife, which stand at the other end of the same courtyard, "are heaped all kinds of contumely." One kind I had just witnessed, the owner of the stick being a child that had climbed on to the railings placed round the statues to protect them. For the people still spurn Ch'in, and until impeded by these palings were in the habit of expressing their feelings by spitting on his effigy and heaping on it literally other "kinds of contumely."

I watched an old lady totter up on her bound feet and beat each statue across the head with her stick, while she murmured sounds of reprobation. Then she walked over to the statue of the good Yao Fen and blessed him and stroked his face with both her hands, as the polish on his cheeks showed many had done before her. She hobbled up the courtyard between the little avenue of statues to Yao's tomb, knelt down before it, and put her forehead on the ground. Stiff with great age, she did this three times without shirking, stood up and, bringing her hands together in prayer, raised the tips of her fingers to her face and lowered them three times. Beside her, her grandchild, or possibly her great-grandchild, knelt, kowtowed, and swung its hands in serene imitation of its ancestor, but, with the speedier movements of its springy limbs, taking less time, and producing a faint effect of parody.

Round these two, all about the burial-ground, which looked more like a walled garden, thronged other old women with children, and men and their wives, walking about, sitting on the grass behind the tombs, hitting or caressing statues, standing on the miniature arched bridge over the little lotus-pool, and staring in delight at the plum-trees in bloom.

I sauntered through other courtyards of the shrine; here and there were booths selling fancy-goods and photographs, rubbings, and walking-sticks. A tea-

THE MONASTERY OF SECLUDED LIGHT

shop occupied one side of the courtyard in which swam sacred fish. The other side was filled by one of those exhibitions of pickled freaks and specimens which, beloved by the inhabitants or not, flourish in so many small towns both in China and Japan.

Outside the enormous scarlet entrance gates, dense crowds filled the road down to the edge of the Lake. Two boys of about seventeen, police probationers, were trying to control the crowds and traffic, but their self-consciousness and youth had the inevitable result that nobody paid attention to them.

The crowds gorged the eye with colour. Dark and bright blues, ultramarine blue, faded, patched, and new, blue cotton trousers, coats and caps, blue cotton, blue silk, everywhere blue figures of men, women, and children, rich and poor. A flood of blue. Floating on it were splashes and patches of other colours, commonest of all the golden linen satchels that hung at the pilgrims' waists and carried their food, their offerings, their joss-sticks. The women wore magenta bands round their heads, and broad green belts, white socks and green or magenta shoes. The colour was like the seething pool at the bottom of a waterfall.

I walked on by the lake, along the modern motor-road towards the Monastery of Ling-Yin. I resisted the appeals of the boatmen to hire a sampan, despite the temptation to sit in one of these floating barouches,

furnished with armchairs, table, and tea. I watched the young students, girls and boys, sketching outdoor scenes in the Western style in water-colours. Some pilgrims overtook me, others I overtook. Families in single file ambled on at the pace of the slowest member—the mother enduring on her bound feet. The rich man strode by unhampered in his rustling silk, wearing the short black jacket over his blue gown, his needs carried for him by a coolie or his servant. The richer man lolled in his ricksha, and the very rich were carried by four bearers in their “chairs.” Everywhere were brilliance, hubbub, women, and children. They were spring pilgrims, from Shanghai, from I-shing, from Chapu, and from many other surrounding places. Hangchow and its hills are crammed with shrines and temples, Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian, though three-quarters of what there used to be are gone. Once a year—on no particular date, but when the spring has come—as many people as can save enough will make the journey to their favourite shrines or gods—husbands to one, their wives maybe to another; it is all the same. Such pilgrimages are made too all over Japan when the spring comes, and then the temples and their courtyards are filled. But how different they look! The outsides of the buildings are less often coloured, but have the sober brown and grey of their timber walls and tiled roofs. And in their courtyards the twitter

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of a thousand children, brown-faced, black-eyed, the girls dressed as girl guides, the boys in sailor suits, but all in black or dark-blue foreign-style clothes. They sit and eat frugal picnic lunches, not in rows, but in tens of rows. They stand about wherever they were posted, only to start and wriggle away after five minutes on mysterious purposes, and then slip back. The little dark figures wait, tread water, and turn. The scene is like a tank crammed with newts.

I left the road and its stream of blue pilgrims, scattered every ten minutes by the racketing motor-buses, and branched uphill towards the Taoist temple, Kao Ling. I idled in its exquisite courts, while two monks, their long hair coiled up in a pile through the hole in the crown of their black hats, walked slowly up and down the cloister, talking, leaning over the balustrade to watch the fountain and the fish, or the cherry-tree brushing against the wall. I could have spent the whole day with relief in such a refuge, but I left it and clambered up the hill to see the view of Hangchow, West Lake, and the surrounding hills. From a little pavilion on the top I had my view: Hangchow and the rich flat plain to my left, before me the Lake, split by the Broken Bridge in two, edged with poplars and pollard willows, and decorated with those green islets, artificial and natural, that are full of historical and literary associations dear to the Chinese. Beyond the lake and to the west were the

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hills. They were important to me; they held hidden in their folds those temples, monasteries, and caves whose flowery names seem scarcely real and whose serene seclusion I was so eager to experience. I could not pierce the haze, I could not test their secrets; I could only say over again to myself that I, R. Pyke, of London, would now walk to the Monastery of Secluded Light, in China, that I would walk to the Monastery of the Bamboo Grove and climb the North High Peak; that nothing prevented me from wandering, now in the real present, through Dragon Well Valley, to the Cave of Morning Mist and Sunset Glow, or from passing, if I preferred, by Wang's Villa to the Monastery of Pure Compassion, on to the Tiger Run Monastery and the Thunder Peak Pagoda. Before I entered each and in still solitude strained, like a blind man lost, to steal from them something of their secret essence, I let my sight rest idly on the whole range of hills.

Faint reports echoed up in pops and bangs from the edge of the town behind the hill I stood on and broke my train of thought. Down in the plain, past the new "Metroland" house standing in its own walled enclosure, I could see tiny figures crowding in procession along a sandy road. They stopped; and more reports bubbled up through the air, scarce loud enough, when they had done the distance, to tap the ear.

• Green and white and magenta and yellow dresses



HANGCHOW

"From a little pavilion on the top I had my view"

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jogged along the track; a chair on the shoulders of four bearers moved inch by inch across the scene. Was it a funeral or a wedding? The usual question. I lay on the grass and watched these toys move and antic, the crowds coagulate and melt. I could not tell; I did not care. I turned away and went down the hill towards the lake shore.

The pilgrims were out of sight; only a few peasants tilled the fields and stared and laughed as I, neither in ricksha, motor-bus, nor car, but crazy, on my feet, walked towards Ling-Yin. I reached the village and the monastery gate. I stepped under its arch, on to the bridge that passed across the stream, the stream that had flowed down North High Peak from the Monastery of Secluded Light; the stream, filled with orange peel, tins, garbage, rags. Brown sweaty faces pressed round me, ricksha-pullers, guides, pedlars. They stank. Over their gabbling heads I saw the broad avenue sloping up the mountain, the stream one side, the monastery walls shading the other. Against the walls a row of women stood, selling toys and incense-sticks, food, and common little reproductions of the shrines' effigies. The stream danced shallow over rocks, and a cliff, festooned in ferns, patched dark with the mouths of caves, walled its further side.

"No," I said, and shook my head at them again and again. They would not, it seemed they could not,

believe me. I walked on, the pack at my heels. "Ricksha, Mister! Ricksha, Mister! Ricksha! Ricksha! Ricksha!"

The Monastery of Secluded Light.

I turned, put my hands on the shoulders of the nearest; smiled into his puzzled face, spun him round and pushed him away. He laughed. Understanding lit up his face; they left me.

I walked into the Hall of the Four Temple Guardians of Ling-Yin. I beheld the huge effigies, the sumptuous altar with its fantastic, exquisite, deep-cut gilt reliefs, the incense-urns, the giant candles, the remote red-raftered ceiling. I shuddered. Women clattered in, threw coppers in the offertory boxes, lit joss-sticks, and impaled candles, kow-towed, murmured at an altar, talked, and wandered out. I went out too and crossed the stream; and picking my way among the thick-strewn ordure, of which the stench beat up in waves, I climbed a few yards along the cliff to stare in delight at that strange figure cut from the rock six hundred years ago, the Laughing Buddha. The whole cliff-face here is cut about with Buddhas, and under the cliff are caves filled and lined with them. But, among them all, this slightly more than life-size symbol of optimism is unique.

Now I made away from villagers and pedlars and pilgrims, and set off up the long avenue. Soon it turned into a path, which turned into a mountain

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stairway, and led, past Tao Kuang, Temple of the Bamboo Grove, to the Monastery of Secluded Light.

I only glanced at Tao Kuang, despite the attraction of red walls and golden roof set in the wooded hill, and the bamboos leaning lightly, playing with their wanton shadows. I walked on fast, trying to defeat the endless steps, taking them in ones, and now in twos, now obliquely, now direct. I passed the last trees; the bare steps zig-zagged up the hill under the sun. I passed the stone shelter where a woman offered tea, and where bearers waited with chairs to tempt you to take the last part at your ease. Still I went on. I put my hand in my pocket as I heard, above me, the professional moan of a blind woman sitting in the middle of the path, who had heard my approach. My softness induced a child selling Buddhist rosaries to try his luck, but my smile provoked his laugh, and he bundled the necklaces back into his basket. He tried me with an apple; I put my hand in my pocket and showed him one; he tried not to smile and offered me an orange. I drew out two; he laughed again and gave up.

The mountain seemed to tower less; I felt a breeze on my face; in a moment there were no more steps and opposite me on the summit was the Monastery. The ground between was filled with bearers resting by empty chairs; the forecourt was filled with pilgrims, women hobbling and men buying water for

their tea. The monks carried about great kettles, or dropped silver paper money for the dead into the urns. Inside, behind the altar, stared and smiled, impassive, contemplative, whimsical, a hundred gilded images. Their numbers were more striking than their appearances. To climb a thousand feet, to come to a point in the air from which one can go no further, and find these weird, dumb, certainly communing creatures, alone, together in a great bare room, left one confused, a little light-headed. I looked at them and looked at them. They did not move. Not a finger, not a lip, not a lid. Not a rustle. They had sat there together for—a thousand years?

Outside, the familiar stench knocked my head back, and I walked round to the other wall. Below the invisible layers of haze the green plain swung; I looked down on the face of the world.

The descent was easier in spite of the steps. Down at Ling-Yin, as I threaded my way among the passages and caves, where are Buddhas carved in hundreds in the living rock, I was besieged again by pedlars and ricksha-men. Two boys nagged each other while they pestered me for money; until one, disappointed, flipped off the other's cap, and revealed his festering head with a wicked laugh. I controlled my gaze, and turned it to the other side of the road, where a camp of Chinese boy scouts was humming like a hive of bees.

Now I took a ricksha back to the far side of the

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Broken Bridge; then I got out and walked. Three or four miles down, the winding valley narrowed. I could not understand how I had missed the Cave of Morning Mist and Sunset Glow. I was making for Li An Szu, the Monastery of the Rule of Peace, and so far as my feeble sketch-map showed, I should be reaching it soon. I turned in through a red-washed gate with a roof of gold brown tiles; and persuaded myself that this was my destination. Soon I knew that it was not. But soon I did not mind. Enfolded in the hill, the monastery with its red walls, the white marble courtyards, the still bamboos, the tinkling murmur of a bell, the faint echo of a step or voice, the sky reflected in the fish-pool, and the blazing sun were all I needed.

A smiling monk offered me tea. To refuse, in such a place, would have been outrage; to accept, for all that I could tell by looking, was certain death. At least some pain. He stood over me, as I sat on the terrace, the little bowl of dry green leaves in his left hand, an enormous kettle in his right; a modest, pleasant smile on his face. I nodded, and said thank you. In any case, I thought, the water was very hot, if not quite boiling! After the sixth cup I declined another weakly, but I accepted the tenth. The fragrance bewitched, lulled, renewed.

The monk took me to a little stone-paved court one terrace higher in the monastery, where under a

leafy tree a spring bubbled down beneath a stone. Then I knew where I was. This was the Tiger Run Monastery. We passed through another courtyard, and I saw over an altar silk hangings which, under their veil of dust, transfixed the gaze and held it. But I was hurried upstairs to be shown the sacred bed of the late—the late Abbot? My companion had a naturally sensitive face, which had become refined by his contemplative life, and which was all the more attractive because of the rarity of such a sight in such a place. For, sad though it may be, cynical, sordid, and disappointing, the fact is to-day, whatever may have been in the past, that for every spiritual face that you see in China under the shaven crown of a Buddhist monk or the coiled hair of a Taoist priest, you see a hundred faces that are thick and dull and stupid, that are coarse and gluttonous and mean. Peasant families that have not enough land to put their sons to, or that have sons too dense to learn a trade or even too feeble-minded to go for a soldier, are glad to get rid of them in these hard times, when children are being sold for three or four pounds each, to any monastery or temple that will take them. What the consequences will be for China in the next generation can only be guessed.

I said good-bye to the monk, and in return for their hospitality handed a threepenny note to one of the Brothers, and bowed.

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I aimed still to reach Li An Szu across country. I set off again, steering by the help of my sketch-map and the contours of the hills. But the valleys converged and curved, and none that I could see ran parallel. I became more and more perplexed, and at last gave up. To discover where I was, I decided to continue to the top of the mountain along which I was scrambling. From its amazing ridge I looked forty miles across the Cheng River, saw Zakhou and the Six Point Pagoda at my feet, and on each river bank the tremendous piles that were to carry the new bridge. I turned round to the north and saw the hill where must be the three monasteries of India; and I could see the edge of West Lake. Young fir-trees and bamboos covered the hill-side as far as I could see; violets and rhododendrons, camellias and magnolia, wild plum and red-berried holly and tea-bushes covered the ground that stretched from my feet into the valley.

The sun would not live much longer; I did not know how far the valley into which I must descend would take me before I reached Hangchow. I lay among this scarcely credible luxuriance while the sky spread blue over my head, steady and without change. Far away I heard the bark of a dog and the slower, less brittle shout of a man. I let the image fade out of my ear; then I grasped a young bamboo and began to slither down the mountain. Stones scattered, the

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bushes sprang and bounced about me, I slipped and swung and jumped down towards the valley.

Below me I could see blue figures gather by a thatched farm and stare up. I came on down, while the dog barked and barked hysterically. Now I could see brown curious faces, shaded by hands. I smiled at them and they smiled at me, and the farmer said in Chinese as plain as could be, "That's a fine walk you've taken!" I laughed, and they all laughed, while they tried to silence the dog. The path crossed a stream, and the farmer joined me while I sat taking the stones out of my shoes, and walked with me to show me how not to get misled by the paths among the terraces of tea-bushes. Then he stopped, and waved to me, and I saw his brown face under his great straw hat, and his wife and daughter standing outside the farm door in their blue cotton smocks as they shielded their eyes against the sun which was setting in their faces.

I stopped and I looked at them. I had seen them all before, all three of them. I had seen them at the same moment, on the same evening, in the same light. I had seen them in Austria and Italy and Spain. I saw them now on the way to the Monastery of the Rule of Peace; and I hoped they might receive it. For it was all they asked.

7

Chinese Night's Entertainment

THERE was only one thing to do—and that was to climb over the railings. I did so; but it was easier said than done. They were six feet high, rickety, and had points; there was no take-off for a jump, since each of my neighbours sat pressed against me, one on either side, and the bench on which I had been sitting was only a foot behind.

It was the only thing to do, because the EXIT doors, although equipped with the usual push-bars or panic-bolts for automatically opening outwards, were heavily padlocked, and because between me and the entrance door were packed about two hundred people, standing like asparagus in a tin. My action raised the mildest flutter of interest as I jumped over and walked down the centre gangway, passed before the stage and went out by the dressing-rooms and the lavatories, which, if one granted a difference to this distinction, might be said to be adjacent.

Relative to the available space I have never seen such crowds. What advantages I should have received

for a top-price threepenny ticket in comparison with the common penny ticket that I bought, was difficult to judge. Everywhere, the yellow audience sat close in narrow seats—narrow from side to side, narrow from back to front, hard seats, divided by a narrow space from the row in front and the row behind. Ledges at each corner of the hall were covered by blue sitting figures; both side-gangways were choked, the balcony was filled. The ceiling and, I was compelled to believe, the building above, were supported by two or three slender iron columns; the grimy walls still preserved, presumably, enough strength to prevent their caving in or bursting. Yet if a fire had broken out, or if someone had imagined that a fire had broken out, the scene would have been one to turn the hair white in a night. But nobody appeared to be troubled by such a wanton phantasy.

It was a cheerful, friendly atmosphere, informal, almost intimate; nevertheless, the amenities, within humble limits, were observed. Tea was offered, hot towels (grey with age or use) were handed over people's heads in baskets, cups were refilled endlessly from the enormous kettles, and oranges, cooked eggs, meat-balls, rolls, cigarettes, and chocolates were sold on trays by two attendants. This imperturbable pair appeared at intervals, and with contortions that it hurt to watch, made their way from side to side like languid shuttles on a loom.

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The audience seemed to regard the place more as a club or village-hall than as a theatre; they talked or read the newspaper, ate oranges and drank tea, smoked, gossiped, dandled their babies, occasionally watched the actors, and, leaning forward on their arms over the seat in front of them, sometimes, in sheer exhaustion, slept. They watched the actors. They could not possibly listen; for in that "theatre" or "cinema," or hall of entertainment, to hear any work spoken on the stage was impossible above the din that crackled about the atmosphere like fireworks, an unending din like the rattling of pebbles in a can. Occasionally my ear caught the end of a bellow or a wail as one of the actors yelled with more than usual strength; but for the most part I merely saw their lips move, their gestures sweep and change, as they postured and faced each other on the stage, inaudible, like dolls in a tableau behind a glass partition.

No play was acted in entirety; but, as is the custom, one act from this play, another act from that, was presented. Between one act and another the lights were extinguished and a cinema was shown, mostly style 1907 Hollywood romance, and acted by Chinese actors accomplished in the dreadful Hollywood manner. The films were silent, but the audience was not. As each caption appeared, which was often, the froth of talk would boil over; then, suddenly taking shape, would swirl to a vortex and spin round the

columns of Chinese characters projected on the screen. Thus did those of the audience who could read amplify the pleasures of the evening for those who could not.

It was at the end of the second play-act, and before the third film, that I had taken the opportunity, or, rather, made it, and had left after two hours' entertainment. I made my way up the straightest street that I could see, thinking it was certain to take me out of the Chinese City and into the French Concession. The night air was cool and, after the atmosphere of that den, refreshing. It was only ten o'clock; I was not finished yet. Some mildly florid stone porches, a heavy colonnade over a pavement, soon gave me my bearings, and I emerged into the familiar boulevard.

On my way home I had the choice of three. The attractions of one had already been dimmed for me by the gusts of foetid air that it breathed through its badly closed doors over the pavement outside and through which I had passed with averted head many times. Another had been open only a few days and did not seem yet to have settled into its stride. The third proclaimed itself soundly established; it looked always crowded; and patrons, some eager, some sated, were generally to be seen filling the entrance and lending it an air of nice enticement. They, and the dazzling

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decorations embellishing the entrance, always assailed me with sensations such as the author of *Tannhäuser* and *Parsifal* no doubt believed did and should assail those would-be sinners who penetrated the Venusberg and the Gardens of Klingsor. I was not long in doubt; I succumbed torpidly to Venusberg-Klingsor.

Venusberg-Klingsor was an amusement ground, a fun-fair, a "Luna Park." It was the most extraordinary that I have ever seen. Inside the entrance, past the squalid little foyer, with its cold, puddled, cement floor, its distorting mirrors in a row and its refreshment stalls, was the entrance proper, which led again into the open, to an oval space round which everything was built. Round me were huge flimsy-looking walls covered in trellis-work, lit with tiers of blazing windows, and draped with meandering staircases leading intricately under the dark sky up and down, turning on themselves, clinging to the walls, leading, but never directly, from tier to tier. The enormous lengths of staircase, like station-bridges leading from nowhere to nowhere, made the place look like a madman's dream; the tiers of rooms and halls and passages, filled with figures, all of them busy about one thing or another, clearly visible in miniature, the iron supporting pillars, the trailing airshafts, reminded one also of those exquisite section-models of the latest "Giant Liners" that contribute to the beauty of Cockspur Street.

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The attractions were a peculiar mixture; there were numerous cabarets and side-shows; there were three "legitimate" theatres; a troupe of juggler-comedians; two dancing girls; a hall filled with patrons dancing ecstatically in foreign style; a "living skeleton"; a row of slot-machines, each offering for a modest outlay a glimpse of naked ladies posturing beside a pile of petticoats fashionable in 1890; and, on the ground floor in a little roofed circus, a trundling cavalcade of those same disillusioned donkeys that may be seen, I hope still, on Bexhill beach. Legion attendants, ornamental, detective and "chucker-out," ambled or stood on guard everywhere; the strains of automatic music, of the screaming Chinese falsetto voice accompanied by a Chinese flute, and the hot, sickly, muffled throbs of jazz wavered and clashed in the night air. I completed a grand tour of the territory, then entered a theatre.

It was evident at a glance that this was a grade higher in the social and economic scale than the "theatre" in the Chinese city from which I had come. There was less din; I could actually hear the actors. The seats were covered, and less narrow, the hall better lighted and bigger, the emergency exits were not padlocked, and only one instead of two of the three gangways was choked with spectators. The audience was no doubt equally poor, or, if not equally, then scarcely less so; yet there was a greater ex-

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pansiveness, a greater leisureliness, positively an air about them.

That there was money, a little money, had been divined by others in the audience besides me. Prostitutes, accompanied by their inevitable women-owners, sauntered about among us, murmuring a word here, directing a glance there, plucking at a sleeve somewhere else. These girls, crudely powdered and painted, clad in their high-collared blue silk dresses, and wearing that exaggerated fringe of hair that once signified a maid, behaved no differently, except for a greater persistence and a more brazen badinage, from their sisters in other continents. Their ready glances passed over me, white foreigner, and then, as my curious gaze remained, sometimes returned, with an expression of, "Well, . . .? You never know. . . . It happens sometimes." A coolie lad standing beside me tried to deter one of them without success by silent head-shakes, which he alternated with half-amused, half-appealing glances at me. It was only after I had left the theatre and was climbing one of the enormous outdoor staircases that I passed what was, if I interpreted it aright, one of the most comical, if pathetic, sights that I have ever seen.

A girl and a woman were sitting one on either side of a boy of about seventeen. They were pressing their case—it looked as if the discussion of terms had

reached an advanced stage. Each was leaning forward, hoarsely eager, over the boy, the girl exercising all her surrogate charm, the woman pointing out the bargain. Between them, looking down at them through thick spectacles, his elbow on the rim of a tub of geraniums, a cigarette between his fingers, lolled the yellow youth, dressed in his poor, black cotton student's uniform and driving a bargain coolly, but wearing an expression of such fatuous vanity as one had never seen. The police are supposed to prevent this hideous work, but in the streets they stand and watch. *A quoi bon?* That device might appropriately be worked upon the national flag of China.

On the other hand the Chinese would argue, and with force, that it is realistic tolerance that prompts those policemen; an unwillingness to create more cruelty by the enforcement of an unworkable law that takes no account of causes. It is true that the Chinese police are tolerant up to the point where they take action, when they are apt to act with sudden violence and brutality. Below that point they are probably more tolerant than foreign police. Once, when I was taking photographs in a big town, and was walking with a Chinese friend, a plain-clothes policeman drew him aside and asked about me. "All right," the policeman said quietly, "I rely on you. If you are satisfied that he is harmless, then I am.

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Keep an eye on him for me." But I have seen another Chinese policeman scatter with his boot to the side of the road an old fellow's vegetables that he was taking to market; and another belabour with his truncheon a ricksha-puller who failed to obey a traffic signal. (In the same situation I have seen a Japanese policeman pull up a humble Japanese ricksha-man, whom he threatened and hectorred, but was much more intent to humiliate than to strike.)

To return to the Chinese police attitude to prostitutes, the police probably argue further, do not the rich keep concubines? Then what is the difference? In any case nobody minds, and certainly nobody notices, so why bother about these girls?

Indeed, in the theatre no one remarked them; fathers of families stood with their wives and watched the play, engrossed, absent-mindedly handing a sucking, whimpering or sleeping baby back and forth every quarter of an hour or more—more, only if it was the mother.

The spectacle that engrossed them, like the spectacle that had engrossed the humbler audience earlier in the evening, was not a whole play, but a single act. It was a traditional play that must have been well known to all the audience from their childhood. As I watched it, a feeling came over me that someone had told me of the play. It was difficult to be certain, for I could not understand what was being said, and

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the faces of the male characters and the intonations were different from anything that I had seen. Some faces were beautiful, some were grotesque, but all were immobile behind surfaces of dead white. The women's faces were untouched by any mark or any expression; the men's were frightful with scarlet or black designs; with black or fiery beards three feet long, and with head-dresses trembling and huge. Hoarse voices, nasal wails, and slow perfunctory gestures and movements, despite their symbolized significance to a Chinese, deprived the action of almost any semblance of ordinary humanity by which I might have understood something of its subject. Moreover it was, for all that I knew, the first, the second, or the third act of the play. But the memory persisted.

On the right of the stage a figure appeared, standing on a chair behind a cloth hung between two poles. He was hailed by a figure advancing against him; a little conversation took place, each bawling at the top of his voice; then the cloth was lifted, and the figure passed through. The incident was repeated twice; but on the last occasion the parleying took place with the advancing warrior supported by a squad of pikemen, and the guardian of the gate standing with other soldiers behind an embattled rampart. There proceeded long argument, liberally interspersed with comic "business." Finally the would-

be intruder, as he appeared to be, was admitted to the other side of the rampart and passed through the gate to appear on the battlements with the rest. The act was concluded; two tawdry curtains were drawn across the stage, and the din rose again to its normal steady rattle. I felt little doubt that I had just witnessed a presentation of the third act of *Lady Precious Stream*. If it was, how excellent an illustration of the difficulties, if not the impossibility, of translation in the literal and full meaning of that word—a moving over. For the “plot,” the story had emerged recognizable; but to me, a European, with no knowledge of Chinese, the “original” seemed stiff where the English rendering had seemed graceful, the one clumsy, tedious, and unreal where the other had seemed delicate, moving, and convincing. I am not so foolish as to criticize either performance; but only remark on the problem of translating atmosphere. The hoarse shouting of the male characters, the nasal falsetto wail of the female-impersonators, the strange abandonment of the role and the casual roving gaze of an actor while he was not speaking, the—to me—hideous appearance of many of the male characters, denuded the Chinese version of those very qualities that had made the English play attractive. I began to wonder if the English had liked the right play for the wrong reasons.

It may be thought that a low-class theatre in a fun-

fair hardly affords the right material on which to base such a comparison or form a judgment. To be sure, caution is needed; I have tried to use it, refraining from generalization and merely recording my impressions. It should be added that I have witnessed acting in other Chinese theatres. The Chinese theatre reveals some of the same characteristics as one finds in other aspects of Chinese life. It contains, as in other countries, the complementary aspects of life, the conventionalized and the actual, life as filtered through art, on the stage; life as it is, in the audience; stateliness, sentiment, style, on the one; inelegance, drabness, and confusion in the other. Two characteristics of all Chinese life are publicity and noise. Like Louis XIV, you are born, you live, you eat, drink, and sleep, you die, you are shrouded and buried in public. In the theatre you eat and drink with your family, you conduct your children through many of childhood's functions, neither perturbed by nor perturbing other members of the audience. You and they talk as and when you please; boys bring round refreshments, tea, and hot towels, and shout their wares without the least consideration for either the actors or the audience. Nor, it should be remarked, does any of them show any desire for it. The actors indeed go far to rival them, shouting, roaring, and wailing according to their parts.

It should be remembered in considering noise in a

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theatre that a play used to be, and in many parts of China still is, presented in the open; the adjustment to other conditions is slow in coming. The expressions of voice, like the expressions of face, and like colours, are to a great extent conventionalized. A roaring voice for a warrior of valour, and a more lusty yell for a comic servant, and so on, are sustained for a whole play and must always be used for the respective parts. The female roles are played by men, except occasionally for a minor role or two. Female roles are played in a high screeching nasal wail which at first is not only almost intolerable to a foreign ear, but presents no differences, and no merit. Gradually differences of expression and a certain style, a certain *recitative*, begin to emerge; but I doubt if any European can enjoy these falsetto voices unless he has already a deep understanding of and a long acquaintance with China and Chinese.

The general noisiness is swollen suddenly at intervals by ringing choruses of approbation that acclaim an actor when he has spoken a line with what the audience consider exceptional beauty, subtlety, intelligence, or verve. Then "*Eee-a-kh-aaah! Eee-aaah-kha!*" they clamour.

The actors make no sign. They sway and turn in their huge brocades, performing now this conventional movement, now that, now rowing with an oar, now mounting or riding a horse, now opening and shutting

THE GREEN EDGE OF ASIA

a door that is not there. Although conventionalized for hundreds of years, these and other movements still reveal an occasional quality of vividness, as when a plank between a river bank and a boat is gingerly crossed.

"Make-up" offers fewer such opportunities; the faces are captive behind a wall of white; twirls and furrows, grins and frowns, and a blank beauty, an impersonal melancholy, stare at you the play through, in frightful fixity. A handsome hero will wear a black beard to his knees; an irate villain a red beard. Black is the colour for good looks; red is the symbol for anger; a red beard and hair will therefore always adorn an irate character.

At intervals, or after a long speech the actors turn their backs to the audience, and a dark-gowned attendant brings them a feeding-cup of tea and holds it to their lips while they drink, clear their hoarse throats, and spit. The attendant goes out, wanders on again, removes a chair, changes a property, or helps an actor through an exit in order that his elaborate dress shall not be damaged.

Although the Chinese theatre is the most difficult thing to appreciate, it is nevertheless not a waste of time to visit it, for there the foreign spectator cannot fail to perceive what distances in time as well as space separate China from most other countries, what thorough patience he must exercise, how completely

CHINESE NIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

he must empty himself of prejudices and preferences, if he would try to understand the values, the outlook, the attitude, of a people whose problems are becoming his problems, however little they or he may want it, while their attitude, their outlook, and their values remain their own.

8

Sports of the East

TWO temptations above all others beset the visitor to China and Japan; they are, to generalize and compare. These practices might be thought less odious but for the attitude of those who make them, which too often is one of excessive praise for China or Japan and aggressive contempt for Japan or China. With this warning I make a generalization and a comparison. The Japanese are fond of sport. They are much fonder of sport than the Chinese. I have not said that all Japanese are or were always fond of all sports. I have not said that the Japanese are by this much inferior or superior to the Chinese. I have not even said that I think sport good. It is, however, true to-day that the Japanese indulge enthusiastically in swimming, ski-ing, skating, tennis, football, golf, climbing, rowing, wrestling, and fencing. In both countries there are certain relics or a certain revival of archery. To-day a few Chinese enjoy fencing and tennis, and to an increasing extent swimming, and in Shanghai I have often seen them watching the races from Bubbling Well Road. But that is all.

SPORTS OF THE EAST

For further evidence of the attitudes to sport of the Chinese and the Japanese, consider the 1936 Olympic Games, not only the parts played by each nation, but the intense efforts that the Japanese made for the next occasion to be held in Japan. Allow for the motive of propaganda, allow for the advantages of organization and unity and money; it remains that enthusiasm for sport in Japan is infinitely greater than in China. In China it is at the moment growing slowly in parts where the National Government has influence; and swimming and other sports are encouraged by the New Life Movement, of which Madame Chiang Kai-shek is President. But apart from organized sports like football, or expensive sports like rowing, the same comparison holds in what is presumably the simplest, cheapest, least organized sport, or at any rate recreation, in the world—walking. In Japan you see people walking in the country for pleasure; old people and young, in parties and alone, girls and boys. I never saw, so far as I knew, and never heard of Chinese doing the same. Some may; it would not surprise me to learn that walking and other sports are spreading among university students; but in China they are still, and in Japan they are not, an extremely small minority.

Among the sports practised only by the Japanese, it should be understood that they have much better natural facilities and transport arrangements for ski-

ing. It is typical of them, however, that they engaged the great Austrian skier, Johannes Schneider, of Sankt Anton, to come to Japan to teach them.

The Japanese skate now, like the English and Americans, on artificial ice. In Kyoto you may step across the road from a spectacle of Kamogawa dancing in the geisha theatre into one of the biggest indoor rinks in the country, and find it filled with hundreds of Japanese in foreign dress practising assiduously and sweeping and gliding gracefully. It is a strange sight; they are so small, the hall is so vast; they are so dark, the rink so white. In foreign dress, seen in large numbers, they are apt to lose their charm, yet they gain something by the grace and ease of their movements, a grace that is the more noticeable for its rarity. For one characteristic both Japan and China possess in common: to a European eye at least, the mass of the people appear to walk not only not gracefully, but ungracefully. The reason in Japan is the sandal, which is held to the foot only in front, by a thong between the toes, and would fall off if long steps were taken. In China the men are used to carrying enormous loads on poles across the shoulder, a method that requires a short mincing step to reduce the spring of the pole; and as for the women, too many have had their feet bound, nor have any danced or acted on the stage. It is a strange relief to see the people in Korea walking through the fields with a

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swinging grace, carrying loads upon their heads—a sight I have never seen in China or Japan.

Mountaineering is another sport that you meet with in Japan and do not hear of in China; and at least two Japanese are members of the Swiss Alpine Club. Rowing is popular in as many universities as have water to row in; one of them sent a crew—and its boat—to Henley in 1936. Wrestling, or judo, is one of the most popular sports and spectacles in Japan; but it would require a chapter, if not several chapters, to itself.

To turn back, however, to the sports that the two countries have in some degree in common: tennis, archery, and fencing. Tennis was introduced into both countries from the west, and in both countries the same game is played. But there are differences even here. More tennis is probably played in Japan by Japanese than in China by Chinese (that is, excluding foreigners, of whom a great many play in China). Whether this is so partly because the few Chinese who play abroad renounce their enthusiasm when they return home, whereas the Japanese gain converts, I do not know. In both countries there are clubs and tournaments. In Japan, except for the fact that all of the players are brown instead of only some, the scene resembles a club court in England, only in Japan it may be a little smarter. In China, on the other hand, even foreign games become sinified, no less than foreign concepts and foreign conquerors.

I remember with pleasure a tennis club in Nanking. The men and women players wore dapper white flannels and Helen Wills eye-shades, and an umpire sat in a perfect *Tatler* posture on the top of the usual enormous pair of housemaid's "steps." The courts were hidden from the public by canvas walls stretched between posts. But not only were intruders not turned out (the pretence that they were ball-boys being gradually abandoned), the club had considerably provided for the public by cutting in these canvas walls, at different levels, flaps which might have been intended as safety-vents for wind-pressure but through most of which children and adults watched. A final touch of friendly informality was afforded by the naval brass band which played between the sets; a naval officer competitor had provided the band free, on condition that they might be allowed to watch the proceedings.

Archery is a dying skill in both countries. Bows and arrows for sale may still be seen in parts of north China, between Peiping and Jehol; and in Japan archery is still practised in certain ceremonies, as in the annual Shinto event of Yabusame, which dates from the time of Minamoto Yoritomo at the end of the twelfth century. The spectacle of this ceremony was revived not long ago, and thousands come to see it every year at Kamakura. It consists of three archers on horseback shooting at a target as they ride

past it. Gorgeously dressed, with skins over their legs, a quiver of arrows on their backs, and a flapping, huntsman's straw hat, with a topknot in the middle, on their heads, they are a striking sight as they ride down the leafy avenue of maples. Somehow they contrive to wear a pair of swords and to carry a fan as well as the six-foot bow from which they shoot. The procession of archers, the ceremonial when the head priest hands the dedicated arrows to the archer, and the intoning of the *norito* before the Shinto shrine, are all, however, parts of the spectacle as important as the archery itself.

There remains, common to China and Japan, the sport of fencing. The traditional style of fencing in China is between sword and sword, and between sword and lance. Both varieties were introduced into Japan. In both countries you can still see them practised. In China you see the traditional style with actual weapons, and also in shadow-fencing, in the theatre, in the cinema, and in fairs; in Japan you see combat between sword and sword, and sword and lance, in classical plays and traditional legends on the stage and on the films. I have never seen shadow-fencing in Japan. But even in the traditional-style fencing, which was copied by Japan from China, there are differences to-day. On the stage in China a combat, like nearly everything else, is conventionalized and symbolized. A sweep of the sword, a few languid stabs and passes

with a lance, even though ordered, and a stage duel is over. In Japan, although there is rarely the illusion that a combatant is pierced or struck, the duel is ferocious and long, the movements and passes incredibly quick, and according to duelling rules. It is vigorous and varied, and, while its movements are conventionalized, it is not abbreviated to three or four symbolical gestures. In Chinese films duels are sometimes longer, but they are unconventionalized and plainly realistic; in Japan, except for the slightly greater freedom that the cinema in general affords, they are the same as on the stage. But it is in actual sport, and not on the stage, that the real difference appears. In China, the nearest things to sport, outside the recent efforts of the New Life Movement, are probably the fencing exhibitions at fairs and the shadow-fencing in colleges and clubs; in Japan, fencing for sport is another matter; it is Kendo.

I remember one evening in China, when I had strolled out of the busiest street of the town where I was staying into an open space about fifty yards square. It was no more than a dusty yard between the street and a covered market. From the ring of spectators, composed of greybeards and boys, I judged at first that they were the audience of a storyteller. But I found that they were watching a fencing-bout, partly exhibition, partly comic, between a man and a boy. The comedy consisted in the man, or leader

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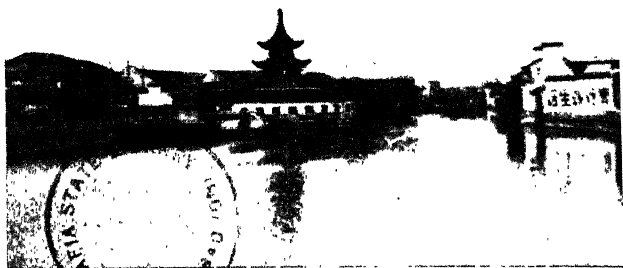
of the troupe, trying to drill an army of three impudent and rebellious "soldiers" who, after putting up for some time with his abuse and bullying, dashed at him, pommelled him, and when he seized a sabre, snatched up a lance or sword and made at him in turn. After copious backchat and well-simulated anger—here came the exhibition—they gave a realistic performance of duelling with sword and lance, displaying, what at first appears impossible, how the sword can more than hold its own against the length and lunges of the lance, and how the lance can more than hold its own against the swirling sword. The dancing foot-play of the swordsman, the bandmaster-twirls of the sword, the tense, sharp, lightning movements and control of the eight-foot lance, were a beautiful sight, when the slap-stick gave them free play.

Shadow-fencing is almost more beautiful than fencing with weapons. It is practised in "slow-motion," a whole class sometimes following the movements of an instructor. Students, and men who are earning their living in the day, will come to a club in the evenings and practise the separate positions, the movements of body, of legs and feet, of arm and wrist and finger, over and over again until they are as perfect as can be. The easy yet accurately controlled curves, the sleek transitions from one position to the next, the delicate balance and use of the whole body,

and the sinuous continuity of movement, produce mobile art, if not a virtuosity, that is to be seen in no European form of combat.

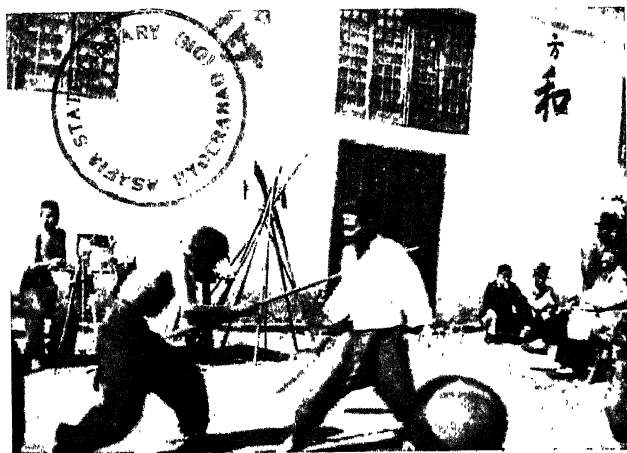
Kendo, the Japanese fencing, requires just as great physical control and, as the Japanese would claim, a great, or greater, mental discipline. At the same time it stimulates both the spirit and the practice of competition. In its combination of physical skill and severity, in the atmosphere of ceremonial, and the value placed on certain abstract qualities, amounting to more than mere "sportsmanship," it is characteristically Japanese. Kendo has been practised for so many centuries—probably twenty to twenty-five—that its origin is lost; it is practised so widely and so keenly that there are national tournaments in which every kind of competitor takes part and which are sometimes attended by the highest dignitaries, military and others, not excluding, on the highest occasion, the Emperor himself. Kendo requires years of training; at least five or six to reach a high standard. It demands not only poise and endurance and a quick eye; it requires the performance of its art to be perfect in every detail, to be entered into each time in the spirit of unvarying ritual.

In the Butokuden, or Hall of Martial Virtue, in Kyoto, a wooden, pillared hall some forty yards square, hundreds of men and women and children of all ages sat on the floor and watched the annual con-



NANKING

Right: an exhortatory poster of the New Life Movement



CHINESE LANCE AND SWORD PLAY

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petitions. Many of the spectators were competitors; many were undergraduates; others were newspaper-reporters, professional men, officers, and dons. I could see no foreigner. The judges sat half-way down one side of the "ring"; the referee stood opposite. The combatants approached from opposite ends. They wore black cotton tunics, heavy masks, black protective corslets of polished leather that just covered the hips, and gauntlets. The weapon was a stave four-and-a-half feet long and about two inches thick, made of split bamboos glued together and bound over the ends with reindeer skin. It is called a *shinai*. Some of the duellists wore white socks, with a separate hole, as usual, for the big toe; a few fought bare-foot.

In unison the adversaries bowed, knelt, and faced each other at opposite ends of the ground. In unison they bound the white protective cloths about their heads and placed the helmets over them. In unison they grasped their weapons, approached, turned, and bowed to the judge, faced each other once more, and crossed weapons.

Then they fought. They lunged and struck and parried. The scoring is by points; the four parts of the body to aim at are the head, throat, trunk, and arms. A thrust on the throat is no light matter, nor a blow on the hip, even through the protective corslet, when the blow comes from the end of a weapon wielded in a full swing six feet from the shoulder.

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At intervals the combatants uttered horrific war cries, traditionally intended to terrify their adversary and boast of the prowess of their weapons. These cries were hoarse and erratic, and by a foreign ear might equally well have been imagined as intended to whip up the courage of those who uttered them.

Occasionally there was a tumble; then time was given to the fallen man to rise. Something like a clinch was frequent, and as the combatants approached or cleared it, tremendous blows were rained at close quarters in fierce, almost invisible, succession. It all looked compact and straightforward enough. But they came away panting, sweating, and bruised.

The audience changed unnoticeably through the day; the judges sat impassive, sharp-eyed, still; rarely laughing, as when some ludicrous fall or missed blow took everyone by surprise. Combatants came and went, sometimes every two minutes, sometimes every six; the referee changed now and then. The brown audience sat and stared; the combatants, without anger or grudge, parried and lashed and lunged for all their might; the great hall rang to resonant whack of bamboo on bamboo, and to the echoes of the extraordinary cries; while over everything and everybody rested the faintly moving atmosphere, the austere spirit, of a ritual.

9

Ohkaydess!

IT is the stern and rational view of some people that our duty is to bring out and to dwell upon the resemblances rather than the differences between nations. Be this as it may, it is often the case that one notices what is different in a foreign country more quickly in the ordinary things than the exotic. A war-dance or desert ruin, however great their interest or value in illuminating the problems of man's origin and nature or of a nation's sociology and economics, may tell one no more about a country and its people than a bathroom or a railway station.

Often, though not always, a railway station in Japan and in China presents much the same scene as in England. In Tokyo the principal station is at present a proud nineteenth-century red brick edifice, upon whose exterior may be traced the influences of the Netherlands aesthetic of that time, and possibly some of the artistic concepts of the late Sir Gilbert Scott. I myself was reminded of the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam and of St. Pancras. The Ueno Station, on the other hand, is modernistic. Inside are a "Nothing

Over 6d." store, loud-speaker train-indicators, a galaxy of neon lights, and a moving staircase. One other quasi-foreign *bizarrerie* I met with. Whether Chinese or Japanese is hard to say; I shall recount it later.

The crowds, which seemed always to be enormous, were dressed, the men in foreign-style clothes or in dark kimono-capes and soft hats, the women mostly in bright kimonos and obis. The ticket-queues were long but orderly—a contrast, like so much else, to those in China, where the nature, purposes, and principles of a queue are only beginning, by infinitesimal degrees, to be understood, by the police a little more than by the people. The Chinese, too, use loud-speakers; while the booking-clerk works as likely as not by the light of two guttering candles; gendarmes guide you past the passport officer and soldiers feel your luggage as you leave.

In China and Japan the railways make concessions to the foreigner so far as to affix, on the main lines, the names of the bigger stations, the platform-numbers, and the word EXIT in Roman characters as well as in the Chinese and Japanese equivalents.

One startling difference is to be seen in China—that is, the coffins. Enormous, shining black coffins, corded and labelled, some full, some empty, lie about the stations like milkcans. In China you are buried with your family in the place where you were born—a custom that entails much coffin-transport. It was

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not rare, even recently, for elderly people to take their coffins with them on long journeys, a famous example being Li Hung-chang, the great statesman, who in 1896, when he was seventy-three, took his coffin with him on his official mission to Russia, across America, and round the world.

On the whole, however, it is the sameness of stations and not their difference that strikes the English eye. It is inside the trains and on a journey that differences begin to appear.

The first time that I entered a train in Japan I thought I had stepped into a sleeping-car filled with passengers who had been stranded and rescued from an accident. People sat and lay about in the early stages of undress, and a variety of clothing lay scattered and hung up and down the coach. Most passengers had taken off their boots, shoes, or sandals: those even who wore foreign dress had taken off their ties and collars, and men in Japanese dress looked as if they were wearing dressing-gowns, since they wore no collars and since a thick undervest was visible at the throat. Even the military took off their heavy top-boots, as well as unbuttoning their collars and discarding their swords and belts. I grew used to these habits, which are very comfortable, and even found myself following suit and surreptitiously kicking off my shoes. The utter arbitrariness of good manners, and the ludicrous assurance with which we

distinguish good from bad, used to strike me with full force whenever I saw a grey-haired colonel and his wife gravely put off their foot-gear, he his riding-boots and she sandals, and both of them curl up with their socked feet on the seats.

The Chinese sit and keep their feet shod as we do. I have been told by a distinguished Chinese of a theory that they, too, used to sit squatting on the ground, but that the habit fell out of use when the people of what is now the region round Canton, a wet place, took to making chairs and tables on account of the damp, and the custom spread.

At night the striking thing again is on the whole the similarity. In Japan and Korea they use the communal sleeping-car as in America and Canada; some ten upper and ten lower berths end to end along each side of the coach and concealed from the central gangway by curtains. In China proper and sometimes in Manchuria they use the European system of one or two in a compartment. They even have the familiar blue *Wagons Lits* coaches on certain lines, as from Shanghai to Peiping, and charge about double for the privilege, the only perceptible difference from the Chinese first-class sleepers being more sound-proof walls, the enclosure of the *lavabo* (endearing term!) in a special compartment inside the sleeping compartment, and a rather greater quantity of sparkling brasswork.

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My first night-journey in Japan was from Tokyo to Nagoya in the winter. I shall not forget it. And here I would digress.

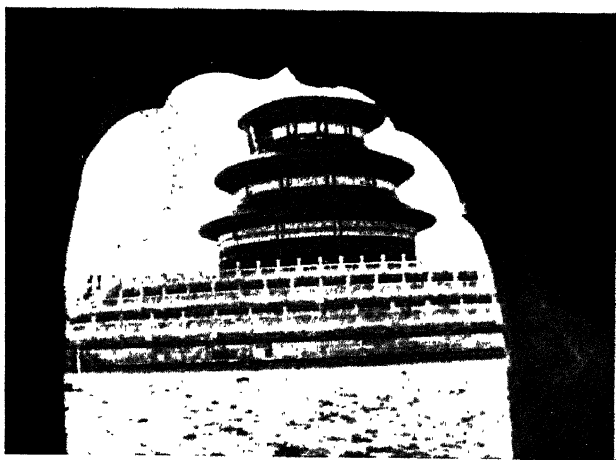
The Japanese, whom I admire and like, and who attract me for many enviable and rare qualities, possess, so it seems to me, a singular knack of adopting the outward semblance without the intention or the spirit, as one might say, of certain Western ways. You will find in your stateroom on the steamer, for example, a telephone, but it does not work. You will be offered a talking picture on board, but the film snaps every few minutes. The whole of Tokyo, an enormous rambling town, is equipped with traffic-signals, but too few obey them. The Japanese are fond of wearing a celluloid nose-and-mouth mask when they want to guard against colds, but they omit to change the pad of gauze; and they walk about with these disfiguring shells, looking as if their noses must be rotting off their faces, and getting a dose of bacteria for their trouble. A more extreme illustration, if not more absurd, is afforded by the following incident. I was travelling in the *Asia* from Dairen to Hsinking, the new capital of Manchukuo. I was sitting in the observation car when the attendant entered and proceeded to pull down the blinds of all the windows of the "off" side. I stared. It was about three in the afternoon. My Japanese neighbour explained that the special train of Prince Mikasa, third

son of the Emperor, was about to pass. I nodded. (It was only afterwards that I learned that the principal official reason for this curtaining from the common gazer is not a safety measure, but the tradition that subjects only look *up* to members of the imperial family; hence, as two passing trains are on a level, passengers must not look upon an imperial train.) One passenger, a Japanese, boldly dragged a blind aside and peered through. Nothing happened. I looked out the other side. Soldiers in steel helmets with rifles and fixed bayonets stood in spectacular solitude every half-mile or so on ridges of the rocky hills and out on the plain. We passed a village a mile from the line, and I could see a crowd of villagers herded behind a cordon of military at a cross-roads. I began to tire of waiting for the imperial train. Then the attendant returned and drew up the blinds, one by one. I was puzzled; I had heard nothing and seen nothing. The attendant went out. A minute later the imperial train flashed by.

To return, then, to my night journey to Nagoya. This humble event illustrates, perhaps not equally well, though differently, this curious Japanese facility for the inept. I was conducted to my sleeping-berth; it was spotlessly clean. Laid out on the bed was a clean cotton kimono, and on the floor a pair of plaited sandals. A courteous young attendant disposed my luggage, asked what time I wanted to be called,



CHINESE FORMS OF TRANSPORT



THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN, PEIPING

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and next morning stood me at the end of the coach while he brushed my clothes, polished my shoes, and gathered up my bags. He was not just attentive; he welcomed me, as he welcomed, no less, no more, every other passenger. Trifling though his services to me were to be, transient and tenuous though my relation to him was to be, he conveyed somehow—in a way that no European servility or jollity, no unctuous Americanism about “Service,” are within an infinity of imitating—this essential point: that while it lasted there was a real, a personal relation, a mutual relation, between us; that he devoted himself to serving me—or was it to serving the relationship? It is by such faint, abstract, yet penetrating qualities that the Japanese bewitch one.

And then. Like the snow-bound Russian moujik who used to pass the winter lying torpid on the stove, I lay on my lower berth, which had been placed carefully over a radiator. Only, far from enjoying a Russian moujik’s torpor, I stared parched and sleepless behind the curtains while I was sweated steadily up to ninety degrees. Even if I had contrived to sleep through this diathermy, the chances would have been still further reduced by the entrance of late-comers, the yell of an alarm-clock every two hours, the frequent resort of passengers to the spittoons sunk four or five yards apart down the centre of the gangway floor, the talk of early risers from about five in the

morning onwards, and the clatter as the attendant dismantled the heavy apparatus of their berths. I was glad when we reached Nagoya.

I left Nagoya in the late afternoon for Kobe, a journey of about four hours, during which dinner was served. There are three ways of providing yourself with food on a journey in Japan: you can eat in the restaurant-car, foreign-style; you can eat in the restaurant-car, Japanese style; or you can buy a *bento*. A *bento* is a *cestina*. A *cestina* is a cold lunch put up in a carton, complete with toothpick, paper cup, and table napkin. A *cestina* includes cold eggs or veal, rolls and a slice of Belpaese, and a flask of Chianti. It costs about two lire. A *bento* has two cartons; one contains chopsticks, cold fried sand-dab or some similar fish with a taste like mackerel, ginger—pink or green—white radishes, a tangerine, a portion of octopus, pickled celery, and seaweed. The other carton, weighing half-a-pound to a pound, is full of rice. The two together cost 75 *sen*, say tenpence. The ginger and the fried fish are good; the pickled celery and the octopus very much a matter of taste; *bento* seaweed, looking like dark wafers of gelatine, is not to be recommended: unless it is in good condition, a newcomer will be prejudiced and may never learn to appreciate the subtleties of its warm dark backwash flavour. The Japanese keep the rice to the end to pack everything down with. I could have dined in

OHKAYDESS!

the restaurant-car, Japanese style, and had medium-good food, very cheap. The foreign-style meal, at about *Yen* 1.50 or 1s. 9d., cost some 50 per cent more. I chose this, and experienced the commonplace paradox of a Japanese girl, dressed in a Japanese kimono, over which she wore a foreign-style parlour-maid's apron, taking my order from me in English, repeating it to me in English, and writing it in Japanese. And I heard the cook say "Ohkaydess!" which means, "That's O.K.," as she called the Japanese version to him through the hatch.

I noticed that I was the only passenger to take the foreign food. In China, on the other hand, a surprising number of Chinese took it. The explanation probably is this: In China all life is family life. That includes eating and cooking; no one eats alone. But on a train even a Chinese must eat alone when he travels alone. The Chinese food, which in a restaurant is always cooked to order, can hardly be as good on a train; so the Chinese passenger either takes the foreign food, or puts up with a dish of rice and chopped egg, and a glass of tea. Or, rather, innumerable glasses of tea. One boy brings along glass cups with lids, and paper packets of "Lipton's" tea, somebody's red tea, green tea, or flower tea; he is followed by another boy with an enormous kettle, which he keeps boiling on a charcoal stove, and from which he fills, and at intervals refills and refills—for 10 cents third class,

20 cents first class—everybody's glass with boiling water, the whole voyage long, whether it is a two-hours' run or two days'. The tea, like the meals, may be taken in the restaurant-car or in your own car. In both cases the food is good enough, as also the light beer and the bottled "Silent" water, despite its depressing name. What may spoil a meal for the over-coddled foreigner is the hoarse riot of spitting as the Chinese passengers, from the most elegant beauties to the most venerable personages, lean out from their tables or pop up and down from their chairs to bend over the ubiquitous spittoons. Only the Chinese who have been abroad and who are travelling in the company of a foreigner appear—try as they will to conceal it—to be embarrassed by, if not averse from, this habit. For some reason, the Chinese are noisier about it than the Japanese. But then to a foreign eye so many of their personal habits show less restraint, less sense of style, than the Japanese.

However, in China you can, if you care to take other risks which may or may not be exaggerated, get your food from pedlars at wayside stations. Chinese passengers buy succulent lengths of young bamboo stems, ten for three-halfpence, which they rip with their teeth and suck and splash about with, spitting out the fibre. They buy oranges and apples and nuts and spiced rolls, and cold ducks roasted whole, each with its roasted head tucked under the roasted relic

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of a wing. They buy much else besides, including unidentifiable dark-brown lumps that look as if they might be meat or chocolate cakes, besides eggs in every guise, rice, noodles, and dried fish. Pedlars there are, not only in number—you become resigned to numbers in China; even to watching six porters at a penny taking one piece of luggage each, instead of one porter at sixpence taking six pieces—but pedlars in variety; selling, as well as food and drink, such different and strange specialities—for they are specialists—as coat-hangers, ear-cleaners, and onyx inkstands.

The other features of the wayside stations are the police and military. Railway police, or soldiers with rifles and fixed bayonets, escort long-distance expresses and are on duty at most stations within the territory controlled by the National Government. They used to be rough customers, unkempt, extortionate, and insolent; now, they are smart, friendly, well-behaved, and disciplined. In Japan there are also railway military at the big stations; I never saw them on the trains. In both countries railway conductors and guards seem to be civil to passengers of all classes. In Japan they were elaborately courteous. Shortly before each station the conductor entered and stood holding his hat before him, addressed the passengers from the end of the coach, announcing the name of the next station, length of stop, and so on. With courteous

respect, with fluency, and with self-possession he made his speech, bowed, replaced his hat on his head and passed down the coach to repeat the performance in the next one. At the station one might take a turn on the platform, but at the first whistle the conductor, in Japan, the soldiers or gendarmes in China, bowed and pointed everyone back into the coaches.

Which brings me to Tientsin, and to the *bizarrerie* to which I have referred. Tienstin, only three hours from Peiping, is on Chinese soil; besides the large Chinese city, it has four different foreign concessions, but it is dominated by the Japanese. Here the recent gigantic smuggling trade was established. The Japanese military are in unmistakable evidence, including the railway stations. Now, it is a surprising but well-known fact that the Japanese have conceived a great liking for European classical music. The Chinese have not. Whose, then, was the violet imagination that conceived this whimsey? As our train drew out of Tientsin East, the once languorous croon of the Barcarolle from *Tales of Hoffmann* was belched over the air from a gramophone record scratched to the point of death. The heart of Offenbach must have turned sad indeed if he heard those sandy chords blurring flatter and flatter as the train drew out and the gramophone mercilessly unwound its way.

This monstrous noise, whose very purpose even was flat and horrid, seemed fit introduction to the

dreary landscape, as we thudded north through the mud-flats to Shanhaikwan, on the frontier of "Manchukuo." Here we arrived while it was still light, the Great Wall crawling down over the shoulder of the mountain to plunge, like a weary dragon, after its eighteen-hundred-mile journey, into the city on the edge of the sea.

I had to change trains. I took a ticket for Mukden, and entered the Customs. Inevitably, as a fly to honey, the Japanese, or "Manchukuoan," Customs clerk found his way to my camera, a No. 2 Kodak, worth ten shillings, and empty. Basing himself, I make no doubt, on an integral part of the Customs and Excise laws of the new State, he asserted, after playing with the toy, that I must pay duty on it. Its use to me was largely over, since I had no intention of risking photography in Manchukuo any more than in Japan. I demurred; he insisted. I replied that I preferred to destroy the innocent thing there and then and began to do so, when the Customs clerk asked me to postpone such drastic—and who knows?—unexpected action while he held consultations. I agreed; he returned with a reprieve; I thanked him. Now he lit upon even finer prey—a typewriter—and gazed with glistening eyes upon its keys. He picked up the portable case and swung it appreciatively in his hands.

"If—pay—duty—break—also?" he asked, with a faint smile. I laughed aloud and said "No," prepared

THE GREEN EDGE OF ASIA

to be purged for my pride. But he smacked down the cover, waved me through, and advised me to hurry. I did so, and sailed past the turnstile behind my laden porter, out of China and into "other parts of the Far East." There was the train; I fetched out my sleeping-berth- and rail-tickets.

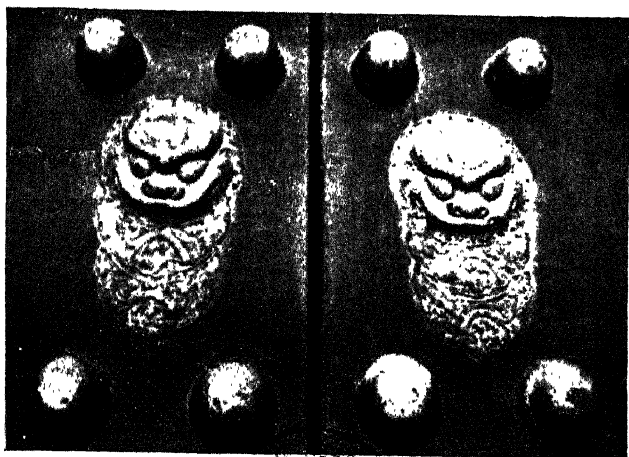
"Passport," reminded my porter. "Passport. No can do. Next train." I brushed him aside, and looked for an official to whom to show my passport. A gentleman of unappealing appearance, with a drooping moustache, doddered up to me. He wore a nigger-brown suit and carried a small attaché-case; he was a small man.

"Passport," he echoed. "Only five minutes. No time. No time. Take the nine-forty." He seemed flustered. No doubt, this was not routine.

"No, no," I replied as gently as I could afford.

"No time, no time," he repeated: "take the nine-forty, take the nine-forty"; and in my ears his voice sounded sinister. I determined that I ought to do anything rather than let this train leave without me and find myself closeted with this odious and maybe powerful person for an indefinite period of time.

I glanced at the four Manchukuo army officers who had just stepped off the train and were lining up on the platform to watch, presumably, its departure. Their swords dangled low, the officers were strapped about with Sam Brownes and pistol-holsters,



GILDED DOOR-KNOCKERS, THE FORBIDDEN CITY, PEIPING



GILDED DOOR-KNOCKERS, TEMPLE OF HEAVEN, PEIPING

OH KAYDESS!

and they wore scarlet tabs. They looked at me like stone. I was scared. I decided to risk being sabred in pieces. The Chinese porter had brought my suit-cases to the platform but had dared no further. I tipped him, seized a suitcase in each hand, and advanced. The passport official advanced too.

"Take the nine-forty," he repeated, probably, I phantasied, for the last time, and almost in a whisper, and he clutched my arm with both his hands.

"Very important, very important," I murmured, looking straight before me, while my heart missed a beat, and I found myself moving forward slowly with the official being carried along in the air, hooked to my forearm. I reached the train and swung my cases on board. The passport official scrambled clear; I stepped in. The four officers had not moved.

"I have a passport," I said, and handed it to him. "I have a Manchukuo *visä*. And I have an English Foreign Office endorsement." I pointed to the formula that our Foreign Office has devised for the passports of British subjects travelling to a certain State which for the British Government does not exist: "Other parts of the Far East."

"Ah!" gasped the official, with relief, with gratitude, and handed me my passport back.

"But stamp it, please," I demanded in cold tones, and returned it.

"Ah!" he gasped again; and kneeling on the sacred

soil of Manchukuo, he opened his attaché-case, took out a rubber stamp, and pressed it upon my Britannic passport. I took it, scrutinized it. "Thank you," I said, standing in the doorway of the coach, glancing over his shoulder at the four officers and feeling like Lord Curzon.

"Sssss. Pleass," said a voice behind me. The conductor shut the door, the train began to move. I went to my compartment, opened the window, and looked out.

A warm May breeze blew in my face; green fields, dotted with blooming trees, stretched from the side of the train a mile or so to the foot of a block of mountains. They were rugged and faceted and gold-brown in the sunset. Up on the skyline, along and down their shoulders, crawled a pale line. The Great Wall of China. Here was Manchukuo.

Double Lives

ONE of the most interesting questions that can be asked about the Japanese to-day is, how long can they continue to lead a double life? For that is what they are doing. The question is interesting, not only for its own sake, but because nobody knows the answer, not even the Japanese.

In Japan, among the Japanese themselves, the foreign and the Japanese ways of life meet and run parallel but hardly fuse. The foreign, which is the new, fascinates them still to some extent perhaps because it is new. Will the two styles, the two civilizations, mix more? Can they? Or will one oust the other completely? Of these "ways of life" one has its origins in a past of a thousand years, the other in one, for the Japanese, of less than seventy. One is the movement of a glacier, the other of a whirlwind. What happens next?

Within the memory of living men Japan has been a country where, to the common people, foreigners were hardly known; a country whose towns were (as many still are) less like modern cities than very large

villages; which lived by agriculture and the products of the sea and small home industries; where the output of the people's effort was used by the people, almost none of it going out to other countries, and almost nothing from other countries coming in. It was a country governed by an hereditary ruler—either Emperor or “Shogun”—placed at the summit of a feudal system in which nobles kept their own vassals, to whom loyalty was paid by the people—who were peasants. How did they pay their loyalty? They paid it by arms in case of need, and—in rice. Rice was their “income”; rice was their tax. “Money” was comparatively unimportant. They lived by and on the land. Except for the small class of merchants they knew nothing but the land. All this was less than seventy years ago.¹

Even to-day almost half the people live by agriculture, but even the country people, although less affected by foreign influences and foreign products than the townspeople, are not immune. It is, however, the townspeople and town-life that form the primary objects upon which work the processes of transformation. To-day the Japanese are manufacturing artillery and fountain-pens, rayon, gumboots, aeroplanes, and matches, and a thousand, ten thousand

¹ The period of transformation into a modernized industrial state was deliberately inaugurated in the reign of the Emperor Meiji, in 1868.

DOUBLE LIVES

other things. They manufacture more artificial silk than any other country in the world except the United States—and them they rival; their merchant marine is the third biggest on the seas and they send steamers to Canada, India, Australia, France, and Mexico; they export their products to England, New Zealand, Brazil, Germany, Jamaica, Nigeria, and Spain. In less than seventy years. Has such a change ever passed through any other country on earth? The face of this extraordinary land is perhaps the more strange because the transformation is not complete, because the old is not wiped out by the new, but survives beside it.

The Prime Minister of Japan receives a salary of £600¹ a year. In Japan an undergraduate with average brains but without "family" or influence may be attracted to the Civil Service, as is still commonly the case in England. Various branches of the Service are open to him, some better paid than others; but taking a very broad average, he will probably start life in the service of the Japanese Government at a salary of about seventy *yen* a month, or £50 sterling a year. It is safe to say that his English counterpart would receive four times that sum. To double his salary will take the Japanese about ten years. By the by the time he is thirty this university graduate will

¹ He also receives much in allowances, like the Prime Ministers of other countries.

be in receipt of an earned income of about £100 a year. That statement, however, is not quite accurate: by the time he is thirty he and his wife and children will be in receipt of an earned income of £100 a year. It is true that with this sum he—that is, he and his wife and children—will not live alone. Their home will be the home of his parents. With his £100 this civil servant will not take his family for summer cruises, or go alone for winter sports holidays; probably he will not have holidays. He will not buy foreign books, or entertain foreign friends in the foreign way. He will work. Impossible though it may be to believe if you have not seen Japan, he will live. He will live in a cleanness, a beauty, a comfort (except for the cold), an elegance of style and atmosphere that none of his counterparts and too few of his “superiors” enjoy or appreciate in Europe.

Indeed, in some sense there is less contrast, less conflict, between modern foreign ideas and traditional Japanese ideas or principles for the furnishing and decoration of a home than in many other aspects of life; for both abroad and in Japan simplicity and spaciousness are the striking qualities and the aim; simplicity of design, of line, of surface, and in Japan simplicity of needs; spaciousness in a small area, and eschewing of the superfluous. These principles have long been universal among rich and poor alike in Japan; abroad they are still only spreading. Japan too

DOUBLE LIVES

has its *Good Housekeepings* and *Country Lives*, in which are reproduced slick photographs of "Mr. Hakatashi's summer home"; and in them I have seen pictures of a Japanese-style interior with steel furniture. There seems a likelihood that here may result a fusion, a new style that is neither the one nor the other nor the two side by side, but something that in itself is both of them and something more besides.

But there is another part of daily life in which the differences between Japanese and foreign styles is wide; in which one way is as good as another; and which, although but a detail, illustrates in an interesting way one of the subtler processes of foreign influence. This is the bath. People who live in towns and cannot afford their own bathrooms make use of public baths, of which there are many. The chief difference in Japan is not their more frequent use but the frequent mixing of the sexes. Among the bathers it is not now universal, but even in those baths where men bathe separately from women, women bathers are attended in the bath by boys, and men bathers, just before and after the bath, by women. The Japanese are completely free from embarrassment in matters of the person; and foreigners tell innumerable stories about their experiences in this respect. Whether in public baths, public lavatories, or in public sleeping arrangements as on ferry steamers, men and women dress and undress and function in the company of

one another without the least self-consciousness or extraordinary behaviour. Many foreigners are embarrassed. Rather, should they not feel ashamed? In fact it is the Japanese who seem more inclined to feel ashamed; not however of their evil ways but because in the company of foreigners they do not feel ashamed! The example is interesting since in this case one method is as practical as another (the Japanese is more economical, simpler, and psychologically the symptom and guarantee of a better state of health); and although no practical advantage is to be gained by change, it is yet possible that change may be brought about by causes which it would be hard to define, but which may also be at work in those numerous other cases where the change is ascribed to practical reasons.

So much for the needs of life. As to its pleasures, such of them as the young family man can allow himself he must, and can, take near home. He can take them extraordinarily cheaply. It is easy to reach the country from Tokyo and from most other big towns, and if he is not content with walking, there is likely to be at least some fishing, a pastime that is very popular. In the town there are theatres, cinemas, and wrestling contests; there are music, wireless (he can buy a set for less than a pound and upwards); there are picture exhibitions, newspapers, and public libraries. In the cinema he can see *Sanders of the River* or *Modern Times* (the speech in English, the

captions in Japanese, and possibly a running explanation by an interpreter); or he can see Japanese legends in Japanese settings played by Japanese actors. He can also see a Hollywood story played by Japanese actors speaking Japanese but using the plots, the appurtenances, the stock, styleless, idiotic mannerisms of the commonplace English or American film. How, one asks oneself, why does he like the two kinds? The question is not "highbrow" *versus* "lowbrow," classical *versus* modern: although performances of the classical or "Nō" plays are now almost extinct except for certain private presentations at which admittance is by invitation, he has the same choice already in his Japanese world proper, in so far as such a classification has any significance for him.

In the theatre, for example, he can see "Kabuki" or traditional popular plays and also modern plays, both acted in Japanese language, dress, and manner. But he can and will see too a "variety show" in a building, with a "chorus" and with songs, the *ne plus ultra* of modernity, as "modern" though not as sensual, but as glittering and inane as anything in London or New York. The songs are in the ghastly jingles and to the goatish tunes of the orthodox revue "lyric"; the words are Japanese, and they are sung in high, thin, tinny, nasal voices that do not appeal to a foreigner. But other voices do; Japanese music sounds melancholy and tends to grow monotonous, but it has a

hesitant beauty. The foreigner is likely to prefer it to Japanese jazz. The Japanese, on the other hand, in their baffling duality, like both! More: they are passionately fond of European classical music. Perhaps this also for its melancholy.

In art there is more fusion, but again there are the three tastes—the foreign, the Japanese, and a style or styles that may become a fusion of the other two; and in Tokyo little exhibitions may be “viewed” that are the perfect match to Paris and London. In art, above all, the paradox is extreme; for how has this craze for foreignness and modernity grown up among a people which not only has cultivated pictorial virtuosity and “mental” painting—that is, complete conquest of their subject in their heads before ever they put brush to paper—to the limit of perfection, but which also considers that Europe has scarcely reached where it began?

Taste in literature has developed in the same catholic way; it has embraced more than it has discarded. In addition to Japanese classical literature there are stories of “modern” life in Japanese, and the whole range of “bookstall” literature and magazines. There are translations of European and American fiction and other works. But most astounding of all, there are large sales of foreign books in foreign languages; books on politics, economics, psychology, science; on music, art, philosophy, and love; in

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English, in French, in German, in Russian, in Spanish, in Italian, and Dutch. And these—not to mention the foreign magazines from the *Detective Magazine* to *Die Woche* and *Esquire*—among a people who are comparatively bad linguists. Is it a search for truth, a curiosity about other peoples, or fashion, and the desire to be “modern,” up to date? I have been told by a leading Japanese bookseller that, whether it pays or not, he must, he always must, have a stock of the latest books from all the principal foreign countries of the world. Since what he can afford to hold is limited, he orders as few of each as possible; and since to replace them takes a long time, the disappointed purchaser looks about for something else, equally the *dernier cri*, and so prolongs the “vicious” spiral.

In dress it is again the same, or nearly so; in food less so. Some Japanese dress altogether in foreign style, many altogether in Japanese style; some dress sometimes in Japanese and sometimes in foreign style. When they have to visit or receive a foreigner, they assume foreign dress, but they will discard it for Japanese dress at all ordinary times, a maintenance of two wardrobes that must be an expensive matter. Others, the most baffling, perhaps to-day the most Japanese, dress in a mixture of both. Is this the incipient *Japano-foreign* style, the true fusion of the future? The present mixture is the Japanese-style outdoor cloak with the foreign soft hat, the brown kimono,

THE GREEN EDGE OF A'SIA

and the foreign sock and boot. The complete Japanese would wear socks with a separate hole for the big toe and wooden sandals, though even he is to be seen, in thousands, with a foreign umbrella. The countryman does not have even all these items of dress. He wears a large straw hat like a mushroom, a short loose cotton tunic with wide sleeves, cotton breeches with puttees or stockings or straw leggings, and wooden sandals. Instead of the heavy cloak, he wears a cape of straw, thatched like a roof to keep out rain and snow. Women, because on the whole they lead less altered lives than men, dress more commonly in Japanese style. It is the factory girls, the waitresses, the bus-conductresses, who wear foreign dress. But others, including the countrywoman and the town-working woman and the wife of the man who himself dresses and lives in foreign style, wear Japanese clothes. For nearly all women, however, they dress, whatever their occupations or their husbands', still live, in their most important relationships, the same subordinated lives as formerly, even if in some minor matters to a less degree. But having married as they were told to marry by their parents, they live, when married, as told to live by their husbands, even signifying such subordination by leaving and entering a room after them.

In matters of food the change is slower, the division more distinct; foreign food is much more expensive

than Japanese food; and except for a cup of coffee and a cake, it rarely seems preferred to Japanese food by a Japanese, who eats it mostly when visiting or entertaining foreigners.

If the Japanese lead a double life in their manner of enjoyment, so do they in their methods of producing those enjoyments. They not only live in a machine age, as we do; they advanced, they charged, to meet it. They also live, as we do, in a capitalist society. But—and this is Japan—they live at the same time in a feudal and patriarchal society. They have factories and “rationalization” and joint-stock companies; they have cartels and combines and manufacturers’ associations. But in all these importations from abroad the similarity to the foreign article is limited; or it is shot with a special Japanese hue. Many of the factory workers in Japan are girls of about sixteen to nineteen who are fed and housed and live on the premises of their employers, sleeping in ascetic, clean dormitories, and receive a tiny pittance of money-wages every month. At the end of their three years they go home, to work on their parents’ farms or to marry. Other factory workers are wage-earners in the Western sense; but still others are this and something else besides: after eight hours a day as wage-earners in a factory, they will go home, to join their wives, children and maybe their own hired man or two, for a couple of hours’ work in some home industry—“finishing,”

making pencils or toys—of their own. Their little equipment may belong to them or they may rent it, or buy it with borrowed money. They drive the equipment with cheap electricity and they sell its products to middlemen who are very likely agents for their day-time employers.

These capitalist wage-earners, or wage-earning capitalists, like the girl factory workers, are regarded as the personal responsibility of their employers, and as owing them a corresponding loyalty. Unemployment insurance, Government regulations, trade-unions can make but slow headway against these and other such feudal practices and ideas, which existed before industrialization took place and were applied to it as a matter of course. They were applied not only to the relations of worker and employer but to the continuity of control and to the relations of employer and Government. Large firms expect and receive support from the Government in various ways, in return—according to the feudal tradition—for services which they are expected to render to the Government, in the shape of taxation and of the direction and organization of output according to national rather than purely individual needs. The control of a business is handed down in the family of the man who directs or owns it, the system of adoption, however, being a characteristic of Japanese family life that is applied to industrial control as much as to inheritance of wealth

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and name. "Mitsubishi" and Mitsui are dynasties as real as ever was Tokugawa.

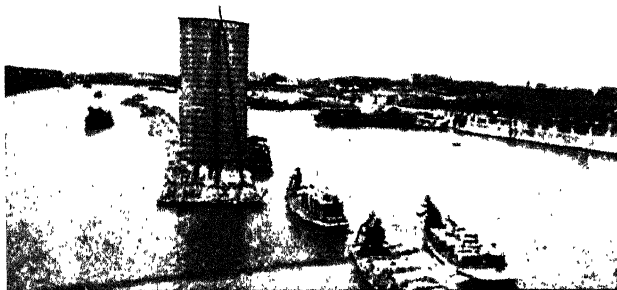
Even in the daily routine and office details of business life the duality is to be seen. A business caller, whether Japanese or foreign, will be greeted with the Japanese-style courtesies, the inward hiss, the murmur, and the bow of the clerk or office-boy or office-girl, as he crosses the threshold. A foreign caller will probably find his hand shaken by his host; but his Japanese companion, whether foreign-dressed or not, will place his palms on his thighs and give a low and accurately graded bow, which will be returned. Or, if he is in a smaller town, the foreigner may be received, without a handshake, by a bow which is shallower than a Japanese would receive but deeper than what Europe, or at least Anglo-Saxony, would proffer. The visitor will be offered a cigarette but also tea (and the same is true in China). There is sure to be electric light; there may be a steam radiator or a charcoal brazier. There will be typists, and there will be a foreign-alphabet typewriter; there may or may not be a Japanese-character typewriter—a huge, fabulously expensive monstrosity, such as might be imagined by an overworked typist in a nightmare. There will be a telephone, and a Japanese telephone directory; but this again, there being no Japanese alphabet, only some three thousand characters or ideograms, is a constant torment and ordeal by

divination to the Japanese themselves, who confess that the abbreviated alphabetical directory in English is used by no means by foreigners alone. Lastly, the office will use not only foreign style stationery, ink-pots, and pens; the thin Japanese paper, ruled with vertical columns, the ink-brushes, inkboxes, and seals of Japan will also lie on every desk.

Moreover, all this duality of apparatus equips a duality of mind. They discuss wooltops and tin-sheets and f.o.b., kilowatts and debentures and bonds, but they will talk about "your first visit to Japan?" first, or the latest "incident," politics, Europe, America, for an hour; and only at the last-but-one moment, if they have not contrived to make you raise it first, will they introduce the subject about which you called. While they "save" time by telephone with one hand, they "waste" it in tea and tobacco-smoke with the other.

What can happen? Which do they really want to do; to "save" time or to "waste" it? To dress in a kimono, sleep on the floor, eat raw fish and rice, watch Kendo and Kabuki plays? Or to be *mobos* and *mogas* (their own Japanese coin—itsself a specimen—for *modern boys* and *modern girls*), to wear boots and white collars and black coats, ski and skate, ride in trams and drive motor-cars like devils, watch Marlene Dietrich and Eddie Cantor, and buy Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the gramophone? How long

NANKING
GENTLEMEN IN
CONVERSATION



THE HANGCHOW CANAL OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF SOOCHOW
"A raft of lumber . . . serpentine on its way"

DOUBLE LIVES

can they stand it? Living one life at home, another outside; a double life?

"That is the beauty of it; that is what makes life so interesting, so exciting," a Japanese friend once said to me.

"Yes; but the strain?" I asked. He denied that there was any; then reluctantly supposed so.

Can a new civilization, one that does not yet exist, a fusion of the traditional Japanese and the modern foreign, come about? If it cannot, then will the two continue side by side, as at present, or will the one drive out the other, and if so, which? Could Japan, even if she wanted to, now put back the clock? Can foreign ways ever completely take the place of Japanese ways? Can the Japanese inject into their civilization so much that is tasteless or unleavened and give it their own inimitable characteristic, that is—savoured with both the chic and the patrician—style? Can a people resolve and ride two such opposed philosophies—that of restricting wants and that of creating them? How long will such a fantastic process take, so fearful a gestation? What will be its issue?

II

China, How Long?

MANY Japanese, in some part of themselves perhaps all Japanese, welcome and enjoy foreign innovations: there must be very few Chinese of whom one could say the same.

The Chinese are not xenophils. In the last hundred years they have had as much, if not more, dealing with the foreigner than have the Japanese, but grudgingly, always, and to this day at the initiative of the foreigner. They have made use of his products and are beginning to adopt some of his methods; but these foreign innovations, which have been grasped by the Japanese and are transforming them, are nibbled by the Chinese, who may be eager to exploit their immediate utility but not to budge from their own habits of life or ways of thought. They *are* budging, but how reluctantly! And how slowly. Moreover, is the shift the beginning of a lasting change, or of one swing of a pendulum?

To an infinitesimal extent the Chinese lead a double life in the same sense as do the Japanese; that is, besides their own Chinese style, they eat and drink, dress,

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travel, read, write, and take their relaxations also in foreign ways. But the percentage of China's population who do these things must be well to the right of a decimal point, and those who adopt foreign ways tend to adopt them so much more thoroughly than the Japanese (an influence of the foreign Concessions) that they retain less of their native civilization. It is not so much a double life as a different life; and few even of these Chinese continue their foreign ways into old age, but then incline to revert to a more purely Chinese style of life than before.

The Chinese differ in two other respects from the Japanese in their adoption of foreign ways. In the first place the Chinese are less uniform: if a party of Japanese "go foreign" in a situation, they will all go foreign; if they are going to preserve Japanese style, they will all do so. The Chinese are more individualistic; some will do one thing, some another. I have even witnessed a dinner, attended by the senior officers of and the general commanding an important Chinese garrison, at which all the officers wore khaki, swords, and Sam Brownes, had their hair cropped, bowed stiffly and clicked heels, and while they stood about like guardees, booted and spurred, in crept a little smooth man in a blue silk gown and slippers, his hands invisible in his sleeves, and with a black, silky, weeping-willow beard—the general commanding.

In the second place the Chinese are addicted rather more to copying—when they copy—foreign forms that are anything from twenty to forty years behind the time, whereas the Japanese, although they sometimes do the same, are also passionately addicted to the modern. The Chinese will decorate their rooms with classical Chinese paintings, and with their beloved scrolls (a completely Chinese taste); they will furnish with the fine heavy Chinese chairs and tables; and they will cover them with lace cloths or velvet coverings with bobbles; and they will match them with low 1890 armchairs and antimacassars and bric-a-brac and silver photograph-frames. Not that the tendency of which these cases are examples is especially Chinese; it is almost universal in borrowing among foreign cultures to borrow from a generation behind, and this is particularly true of humour, and sometimes is even true of speech. It is natural, or used to be, since we derive, or derived, our ideas about foreigners during our childhood from the early experiences of our parents. The lag is only beginning to diminish as the influences of travel, wireless, the cinema, and reading spread. Nevertheless it should not be forgotten that there are now living in China probably about four hundred and forty million people who cannot read, four hundred and forty million who cannot write; and that there are some ten million who can. In Japan, practically every inhabitant can

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do both. In China, owing to the numbers of the people and their illiteracy, owing to their remoteness and conservatism, the inertia to be conquered before any change can be wrought over the face of the whole country, is very great indeed.

Taken as a whole, the Chinese neither want to nor can lead a double, a Sino-foreign life. It may yet prove that they must, but if so, what throes, what travail, what convulsions they will pass through first! In any case, this is not the question about China that forces itself uppermost in the foreign mind; that question is more direct if not simpler. It is, can the material conditions of the people of China improve? Can standards of life, standards of security and sufficiency—not of the amenities, but the bare necessities—be raised? Not how fast, not how widely, but can they be raised at all, must they even fall?

I am well aware that a Chinese may reply that Western standards of material welfare are not the only or necessarily the ultimate standards, and that many of them are neither admired nor sought by Chinese, who are satisfied with simplicity; are not, like us, oversensitized to hardship and starvation, to discomfort, dirt, and death, but find their satisfactions in other ways besides all those material things with which the West clutters up existence. The Chinese, he may say, have through centuries of stern reality become so schooled that they are not hurt or even

affected by the physical discomforts and squalor, by the hardships and lack of independence that we not only dislike and despise but for which we commiserate with them. As evidence that they are not harmed, the Chinese may point to the products of art and learning that they have created.

To these arguments I would answer only this: the Chinese are indeed to be envied and admired for such power as they possess to find enjoyment and create art and learning without dependence on the elaborate and costly material paraphernalia to which the West seems to have become enslaved. But because they have succeeded in creating learning and art in such conditions does not prove that they would not have created more in others. Because they have trained themselves, because necessity and the relentless pressure of environment have forced them, through an immense history, to find mental compensations for the physical disutilities that they endure; because, in fact, they have developed to the highest pitch of refinement and subtlety a philosophy something like sour grapes, that does not alter the fact that, granted any human values whatever, hunger and ruin by flood, overcrowding and dirt that breed disease, recurrent insecurity of family, of health, of life itself, are evils rather than goods. That the Chinese do not wince when they are murdered or complain when they are drowned, does not make death by violence

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and by flood two of the ultimate goods in life. Because living for three thousand years in dirt has bred in them an immunity and toughness that we do not possess, that does not turn dirt or any of these horrors into benefits. Toughness and immunity can be bought at too high a price; a cure can be worse than a disease. It is not enough for the Chinese to say they are indifferent and to regard their indifference as the conclusion of the matter. On the contrary, a prisoner, as we know, grows accustomed to his chains, but his resignation—if you will, his indifference—is a part of the harm, and by any scale of values an evil. To make their philosophy hold water the Chinese must go further: they must say these things are not evils, not undesirable. The fact that the West is partly influenced by irrational motives in its excessive and emotionally tinged emphasis on the opposite view that all these things are “evil” may weaken but does not destroy the arguments that it uses. A valid argument is valid whether used by the Devil or by God.

I am surprised that no one, so far as I know, except in politics,¹ has ever compared the Chinese to the Irish, or, for that matter, the Irish to the Chinese. In their liking for the indirect and their partiality for tea, though not in matters of chastity or commerce;

¹ J. O. P. Bland in *Recent Events and Present Policies in China*, 1912. Mr. Bland refers specifically to the Cantonese.

in their unwestern scale of values, their cheap estimate of time, their refusal to be driven; in their sense of humour and quarrelsomeness and superstition and in their indifference to dirt and death, these two races seem to me to be very much alike. Differences there are; for one thing, the Chinese are more careful and industrious. It is in their resistance to Westernization that these two agricultural nations are alike; and it is possible that China may yet be the first to be industrialized. For, however slowly, however reluctantly and sporadically, China is changing: changing, but not necessarily "progressing," even if we take progress here to mean raising the bare standards of existence without altering the type of life. The obstacles are so many and so great.

The crying needs of China, whose people is three-quarters a country people, are improved agriculture and extended transportation. Not only does the farmer use antiquated methods, but so many things conspire to retard his progress. I have seen the Hopei peasant rolling the sown fields with a stone roller, some eighteen inches long and nine inches across, which he drags behind him by a cord passed through the centre and which he carries home slung on his back. He hoes and ploughs with ancient one-man implements. Why use anything else? The average farm in China is about three-and-a-half acres. Even this diminutive holding is split up by dikes and paths

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and ponds and graves. To destroy or move a grave is like destroying or moving a mosque. It can be done. I have seen it done—and that, by the National Government, in making roads required in the laying out of improvements in its capital, Nanking. But the compensation and the time involved for this exception proved the rule. As long as graves spatter the countryside, as long as holdings are so small, it is useless to dream of tractors; as long as the farmer is so poor that he has little or no reserves of capital and may have to sell in advance for cash his whole crop of rice, even though he must buy back some of it at higher prices after harvest in order to eat; as long as he is overtaxed and is in debt; as long as it is possible for him to borrow his capital at usurious rates and mortgage his land, to be summoned for default, to argue his disputes, and to seek redress, from a dealer, a moneylender, a mortgagee, and a magistrate who may be one and the same man, there is little chance of a radical reform in agriculture.

It is true that railways and motor-roads have been and are being built; that motor-buses are now carrying from village to village peasants whose fathers never even thought of travelling one-half the distance. But some of the railways and many of the roads are still used to a great extent for the movement of troops, and the country as a whole is not yet fundamentally affected by them in the sense that Europe

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was transformed. It is true that electricity can be made cheaply in many parts and may thus promote village industries without the necessity of awaiting any great extension of urban industrialization of the country. Indeed, despite trains and newspapers, aeroplanes, motor-cars, and wireless, the foreign articles of common use that I have seen most frequently in China, in the country as well as in the town, are electric light and the vacuum flask. These, however, do not by themselves transform a nation's life.

Let us suppose that all the hindrances to change could be abolished in a night. Suppose that public health were generally established and improved; suppose the system of land tenure and the methods of cultivation were reformed and improved; suppose that the clutches of moneylenders and "banks" were broken, that the Chinese family system were abandoned, that women were no longer suppressed, and one successful member of a family were no longer held responsible to meet the calls of all the rest, however ineffectual or corrupt. Suppose all these things. Then you will have change; but will you have a better standard of life? It does not follow. On the contrary, it is at least possible that conditions would soon be as bad as before, or even worse. For one of the earliest results would be an increase in the population, or rather a greater increase in the population than the increase which

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has been taking place. Hence, not only would conditions of life tend soon to return to their former level, but a larger number of human beings would be enduring them.

“But what about birth-control?”

To this question I will word my answer moderately. Even supposing a desire, without any opposition, by Chinese peasants to learn and make use of birth-control, these facts remain to be contended with: there are about four hundred and fifty million Chinese to whom, over a generation, to teach it; who will teach them, and how? They are spread over an area of about four million square miles; 2 per cent of them can read; 99·9 per cent of them are probably inured if not indifferent to dirt and have no understanding of the term antisepsis, and are so poor that it may be questioned how many could or would afford even one dollar—1s. 3d.—a year. Add to these facts and questions that it is an individual duty to marry and have sons (even a beggar would probably rather marry and have a son than be single and have none), and then consider how long it is likely to be before birth-control is in general use in China. It is already practised by the middle classes in towns where contacts with foreign life are close and numerous; and a few Chinese doctors are doing noble work among urban factory populations. But these efforts make a speck of dust upon a desert.

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Moreover, there are two further vital considerations. First, even when birth-control is introduced, time must elapse before it affects the size of the population, and still more time before it affects the size of the working population, or its rate of increase. Meanwhile, whether present conditions persist or not, the population will have increased still further. Secondly, in the conditions that have obtained in the past, it is probable that China has needed her enormous population in order to survive. In a country where two million people may be wiped out in a year by famine or flood, and hundreds of thousands not in a rare year but commonly; in a country that suffers these calamities as well as most of the other human scourges such as war and disease, there must have been need for reserves of sheer numbers if the race that inhabited it was to survive. Is not this need likely to have been reflected in the people's customs and attitude to life? May not the origins of the Chinese family system, which is a clan system, and of the high value placed on sons, have their roots in these needs? If that is true, is it likely that these attitudes and values will change quickly even if science or circumstances make it to the people's advantage that they should change quickly? Will not the attempt to introduce birth-control meet with great resistance, in fact if not in words, and with a resistance that it will need more than logic, and many years, to overcome?

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There is one consideration that weakens, though it does not destroy, the force of these arguments. It may be said that if any hypothesis is to be adopted, then it is unfair and unlikely to suppose that some progress or changes would come about in certain aspects of life and not in another; that if I suppose progress in land tenure and agriculture, family life and public health, it is improbable that such changes would be made solely from an internal impetus within China, in isolation from foreign influences, and it is therefore arbitrary to suppose that the practice of birth-control would not spread too. There is truth in this argument; but even when it has been allowed for, the difference that it makes in the picture is only slight.

It must not be thought that what has been said here constitutes more than the briefest and slightest consideration of two or three factors in the gigantic problem of China's future. It is scarcely even a consideration, but more nearly an incomplete statement. No consideration has been given to ephemeral problems, however terrible, such as civil wars, and the world depression, nor to the effect of Japan's growing domination. If not one of these phenomena existed, the question of whether China can ever raise the standard of life of one-fifth of the inhabitants of the earth would still remain, and the solution would still depend, as it depends now, not on the issue of

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Canton *versus* Nanking, not on the recognition or recovery of "Manchukuo," not even on the price of silver or on education, but on the two greatest problems of all, agriculture and the family system, with everything that these imply.

These problems are felt to be problems by the Chinese; perhaps that may be taken for a sign. But the first of them has been regarded as a problem for many centuries and it still remains.

Perhaps "progress" will be forced upon China; perhaps, as one so often feels in contemplating Europe's ills, things must grow worse before they can grow better. Perhaps the Japanese will establish their hegemony over the whole land, exploit it, develop it, and by their own ruthless thoroughness and whether they will or no, teach the Chinese the power of the new resources that man has wrung from nature. It may be that the presence of a vigorous and desperate invader astride the land will force upon the Chinese what endless years of peaceful foreign "contact" would never bring about. If such a transformation should occur, it is not impossible that a changed China would swallow, rend or rid herself of the invader who had taught her, and that she would, unified at last, take her destiny into her own hands.

Lingua Anglicana Orientalis :

Vars. Sinens. et Japon.

MOST people know the story of the English-woman who arrived at a French hotel and asked for a room with a nice "mâtelot" instead of "matelas." It may or may not seem a funny story the first time one hears it, but it is a chastening story. The English are still bad linguists. Too few of them learn foreign languages, and many who do, learn them about as well as the unfortunate lady. As we know, they are lazy and self-conscious, but when they overcome these failings, they learn a foreign language as well as many nationalities and better than some. They are, for example, better linguists than the French, or the Japanese, and worse than the Dutch, the Chinese, or the Indians. I believe that what irritates foreigners about this English characteristic is not the failing in itself, but the lack of humility, even the complacency, and sometimes even the arrogance. It is indeed amusing to observe the bewilderment, not

to say the stifled indignation of an English traveller in the East, when he meets an Oriental whose only foreign language is, say, German or Russian; and, watching a prim Japanese sitting stiffly in an armchair much too big for him, sipping tea with a party of foreigners, and chirping, "Ja, Ja. Eben! So! Ja!" one is apt, let it be admitted, to be pierced, if one is English, by a sense of the ludicrous. Arrogance unpardonable and itself ludicrous! Let us then, if we cannot or will not improve our ways, at least walk quietly, and even yield to a passing shudder at the ghosts of dead solecisms that commemorate some of our social intercourse abroad.

I hope that I have said enough to make it clear that I am no complacent mocker of the foreign student of our language. I do not mock; for mockery, humorous or witty, and however little bitter, is directed at a person, and is derogatory. My remarks are neither personal nor derogatory, and my quotations will be meant to hurt none. If they have any significance it will be that of a warning, to remind the English reader that every time he smiles at a quaint effect he would probably do well to blush for the mote in his own eye.

In the East the Chinese have the reputation of being better linguists than the Japanese—better in English as well as better in other languages. There are several reasons why this is so and why Japanese English

attracts more comment than Chinese English. First, the Chinese have longer and more varied experience of foreign languages. Second, Chinese English of one kind, namely pidgin English, is so well established, including among foreigners themselves, that it no longer seems funny. Third, the Japanese, although willing to make mistakes in order to learn, seem determined, perhaps on account of the expense, to learn or at least to practise by themselves; and to dispense with even the slightest foreign help, by means of which many of their mistakes could be avoided. Again, Chinese English, always excluding pidgin, is perhaps more striking on account of what it says than how it says it; whereas in most cases, though not in all, the reverse is true in Japan. Lastly, many quaintnesses in Chinese English are in the spoken and therefore unrecorded word.

To take an example: consider, for quaintness of what it says, this notice, posted in English in the bedrooms of a good "foreign-style" hotel in a well-known resort in China: "— Hotel. American Plan. Police Regulations require that no gambling, prostitution, or opium-smoking be permitted on the premises." Certainly the grammar, the syntax, even the idiom are beyond cavil. It is only the sentiment, the very pithiness, that might startle an English *materfamilias*. And is it from Oriental cunning, is it from an irresistible temptation to fish in troubled

waters, from a hankering to divide and rule, that the author imputes such blemishes of character to our American cousins? Was this literary trifle thrown off by some returned Chinese graduate from Harvard or Yale? One likes to think so; to think of the young giant rejoicing in his strength. One likes less to think of the alternative: of a piece of human jetsam, some miserable exiled hack, former brilliant Oxford epigrammatist, bundled out of the country twenty years ago while full of youth and promise, now to be hired for a dram or a pipe of opium.

Such a notice in a "foreign-style" hotel in Japan would be out of the question; the Chinese English is funny for the picture that it reveals of Chinese upper middle-class taste; the Japanese for the Japanese ideas of foreign upper middle-class taste, or even, possibly, for the childlike candour with which it attributes it to patrons of that class. In the following case both the romantic and the classical, the charms alike of substance and of form, may be discovered. The passage is taken from the *brochure* of an up-to-date Japanese hotel: "Modern sanitation combined with modern lighting and ventilation reach a twentieth-century standard appreciated by all the guests. The service is excellent. Visitors will especially like the charming little Japanese maidens in the dining-room with whom attention to the guest is apparently a labour of love."

But coy ways such as these do not exhaust the

repertory of Japanese hotel attractions. It was, for example, an unique experience in hotel life, whether ridiculous or sublime, to be greeted at the entrance to the dining-room in one's hotel in Tokyo by the simple notice, "Martial law was declared in Tokyo at 2.30 this morning."¹ In contrast to such soldierly directness, there was a certain oblique, not to say Barrie-ish, charm about the announcement in an hotel in Dairen: "Guests are cordially invited to use the elevator until 9 p.m. while H.I.H. the Prince is staying in the Hotel. The Manager." The atmosphere of "A Kiss for Cinderella" induced by these whimsical words and enhanced by the homely contours of the red-ink lettering, the large, curly paper poster, weighted down on the cloakroom counter by a few coppers, was only dispelled by the sight of the pair of glum little sentries who stood, with fixed bayonets, either side of the front door.

Chinese English, on the other hand, when it does diverge from modern usage, leaps the centuries in a sentence, and produces a style unique in its Celestial-Elizabethan virility and poise. "The Public is hereby Notified" (by Order, Pei Hai Park, Peking) "that as Many a Person has Recently been infured by dogs, no Admittance is hereafter allowed to dogs brought in unchained so as to avoid the possibility of Re-occurrence of such incidence." One half expects a

¹ On February 27, 1936.

burst of royal anger: "By God, I will unfrock thee, villain!" or an indignant tirade against the delinquent public servant in question. The old-world touch is also encountered sometimes in conversation ("Pray be seated, sir! No, no, sir! After you, I beg, sir!"), and for this reason, as was mentioned above, too many instances go unrecorded.

If the Chinese lean towards Latinity and a somewhat elderly deportment in their prose, the Japanese can still be *enfants terribles*, have still to outgrow a certain youthful waywardness of style. It cannot only be defective English or ardour for his country, it must be *joie de vivre*, that prompted a railway publicist to the caption explaining an illustration, "Stream-lined Super-Express Train *Asia* Rushing Through the Plain." "This wondrous train, . . . worthy of its imposing name, . . . presents a very smart and stately appearance." Then, from this pure ebullience the author turns soberly, and with tremendous expertise, to deploy all the virtues of his champion, from "factors of adhesion" and lengths between the coupler-knuckles, to Timken roller-bearings (152 mm.) and fish-belly centre-sills.

Such primness, however, is not common. More typical is the style of the tourism-publicity-expert (and translator) who wrote, "The coast-line is fit for an excursion. It is so beautiful." That is well. Natural scenery excites to eloquence. It is so moving. Later,

he exhorts the tourist to visit a certain clear stream "dashing down the valley in zigzag way"; to attend "the ball-casting festival. This is an exciting holy sport"; and to visit the Kiyomiza-dera Temple, "the No. 16 holy spot in the western part of Japan."

Occasionally, this indomitable propagandist shows signs of exhaustion. Then his style is most appealing of all. "The Sacred Horse: A horse was first presented to the shrine by General Taira-no Kiyomori. Strange to say, horse once presented to deities becomes white in time, what its original colour be. As generally believed, it is because they take fancy to white steeds."

"The Sacred Deer: The deer are found wandering about everywhere. They approach men harmless as domestic ones," and are protected. "No killing. No injuring."

This is charming, vivid, typical, But equally typical, if not perfect of another type, are these excerpts from a programme of ballet by "select geisha," a synopsis of each scene, in English as well as in Japanese, being included in the programme by the enterprising management. The ballet, which was a dance representation of the River Kamo, was entitled The Dancing Tokaido, or Eastern Sea Highway. "Its dancing is too lively to need any comment whilst the costumes of the beautiful dancers makes one feel fascinating." Scene 1 "presents a charming sight of

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the vernal season." In Scene II "follows a sort of amorous dance among (these) dancers amid the sweet music of the fashionable Nagauta, which no doubt delights the listeners immensely." Scene III is about a certain "Miss Koman," who was such a famous woman working at a hotel of Seki that several thrilling ditties were composed in connection with her love affairs." She and "her sweetheart, Sankichi, show us a charming dance, although it is nothing but a mere expression of love burning between these enviable creatures. Their postures suggestive of loving each other might perhaps make young people feel jealous. Nevertheless, it is too touching a scene to miss." Scene IV is based upon "Hizakurige," "an admirable (and humorous) work by Shigeta-Teiichi" (1764-1831). "This unrivalled comic book is familiarly known even to a sucking child," including, as it would seem, "an amusing experience" of the two principal characters, "gotten from the hotel waitresses in the town of Yoshida, which was famously known for its exceptionally hospitable girls in olden days." There ensues a "dance full of comical gestures as well as postures, . . . and there prevails a sort of agreeable atmosphere suitable to the flowery spring." The next scene calls for less comment except perhaps the backcloth, which is "a laborious work" by a certain eminent artist, "whilst (ominous warning!) "the music . . . is played after a Western style." Scene VII

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is "The Blind Musician Asagao." "The melancholy scene . . . is extremely touching, and it makes the spectators feel that a pin might be heard to drop due to perfect quietness." The two last scenes "present a totally gay sight of modern times. As a matter of fact, it is nothing but a Western revue dance which is, however, quite fashionable in this country since a few years ago." "In conclusion, all the fair dancers and the whole staff respectfully express profound gratitude to the visitors and heartily wish for their health and happiness for years to come, while loudly saying good-bye and Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!"

"And so," as Miss Ashford used to say, ensconced in our corners of the Super-Express Train Rushing Through the Plain, watching, perhaps, as Young Visitors are wont to do, "the cows flashing past the window," let us take leave of these "droll and wondrous" lands; and let us, while we are borne away, and while we guard against that odious sin, complacency, protect ourselves from *ennui* by yielding to the charms of *Litterae Orientales Anglicanae*: Vars. Sinens. et Japon."



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